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BACKFEED



ANTHONY PIDGEON

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GUEST EDITORIAL BY MICHAEL MAHAN

The vast number of fanzines and music magazines that populate our newsstands are supposed to give us unbiased reports on the quality of the vast amount of music that is available to us. We can take it for granted that magazines with large circulations are those that specialize in more commercial types of music (when was the last time you saw *Spin* cover anything really innovative?), but the smaller magazines have their own set of hidden agendas as well: agendas that should definitely be put by the wayside.

For example (and these are not reflective of any one magazine), I personally know of one case where a prominent guitar/synth band is refused coverage in a magazine's pages because its editors have a personal beef with members of the band. There is another case where a record was passed through no less than three writers until one of them finally came up with the desired (but undeserved) positive review. Reason: to make the advertiser happy. Other instances have involved agendas against specific record labels, either because of late advertising payments, personality clashes (such as with Van Richter), or because the label doesn't advertise with the magazine. The first issue is understandable—why help promote someone who doesn't pay their bills—but to refuse to do reviews from a label because their budget doesn't allow them to advertise with every magazine under the sun is nothing short of extortion.

Just recently I ran across a new agenda: political correctness. A magazine had requested a review for Muslim Gauze, a notoriously pro-Arab instrumentalist whose music reflects the culture of the Palestinian people (although he himself is actually British). After going through the bother of writing and submitting the review, the writer was told the magazine had a policy of "not reviewing Anti-Semites."

It is politically correct in this country to support Israel, no matter how half-assed and racist their governmental policies may be (the obvious comparison must be made to South Africa's Praetorian government, which for decades made blacks third class non-citizens). It has also become politically correct to assume that if you are pro-Arab, you must be Anti-Jewish. This couldn't be further from the truth. Being pro-Arab merely means that one supports the rights of the Palestinian people. I, for example, support both Palestinian and Israeli rights (although, unlike Muslim Gauze, I deplore Arab terrorist groups—also, let me point out that to a post-WWII British nationalist, Menachem Begin was one of the most vile terrorists to walk the planet).

To use a more familiar analogy, anti-war activists from the Vietnam era were often accused of being "unAmerican," and I found myself frequently being victimized by this bias back in those days. However, these courageous people were fighting against a governmental policy they felt to be wrong. They did not hate America—they simply wanted the America they loved to change its policies.

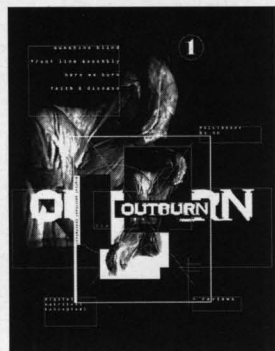
But rather than jump whole-heartedly into a political debate (which I am highly unqualified to do), the bottom line is that the modern fascism that is PC has no business interfering with the free and unbiased assessment of music (especially when the music itself contains nothing that could be construed as racist). Music magazines are about music: they must be free from personal and sociopolitical agendas, and to censor or ban groups from one's pages because of potentially misconstrued perceptions of the personal lifestyle or viewpoints of the artist is unforgivable. It reminds me of the "blacklisting" of the McCarthy years, when talented artists were banned from the media because of perceived sympathies with communism (as if this would somehow impact the merit of their work). We recognize this as anathema to American freedoms today, yet when I spoke to Soleilmoon about the banning of Muslim Gauze from this particular magazine, their response was, paraphrased, "not another one." In short, this type of censorship is not isolated. The blacklisting continues. McCarthyism is simply present in a different guise.

I would be willing to bet these magazines would not refuse to publish a review or an article on a band who was militantly pro-Israeli and anti-Arab.

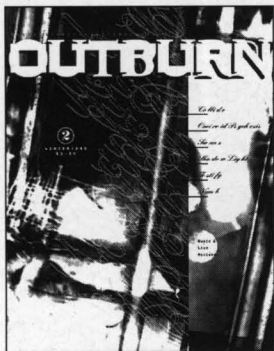
I find it ironic that the CD that was banned, entitled "Arab Quarter," had a song on it called "Anti-Arab Media Censor."

MICHAEL MAHAN WORKED IN COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY RADIO FROM 1972 THROUGH 1989, AND HAS BEEN A FREELANCE JOURNALIST SINCE 1989. HE IS UNABASHEDLY POLITICALLY INCORRECT, PREFERRING TO CHAMPION INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AS GUARANTEED BY THE BILL OF RIGHTS RATHER THAN TO JUMP ON SOCIOPOLITICAL BANDWAGONS. OH, AND HE ALSO WORKS AS A PUBLICIST FOR METROPOLIS RECORDS.

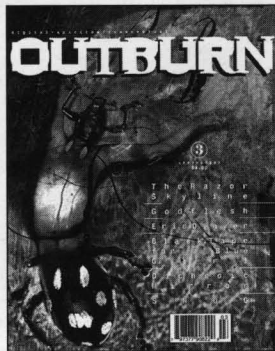
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Issue #2: Collide, Swans,
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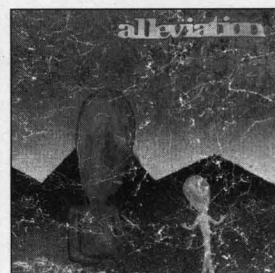
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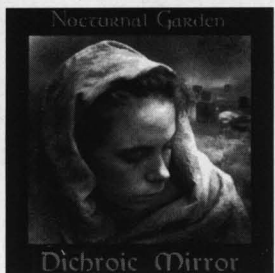
Alleviation (Silber Records & QRD) \$12

Featuring 18 exclusive tracks, *Alleviation* presents music by Lycia side project *Dust* and *Snowblind*, *Trance to the Sun*, *dA Sebastian* of *Kill Switch...Klick*, *Morphine Angel*, *An April March*, *Faith and Disease*, *Attrition*, *Falling Janus*, *Spahn Ranch's* side project *Tubalcain*, as well as many others. Don't miss your chance to own this collection of dark eclectic gems. (Featured in *Outburn* #1)



Cyberpuncture (United Endangered Front) \$12

This underground compilation features a dark assortment of electronic, experimental, gothic, cross-over, and anti-genre acts, with more than a dozen different bands contributing to its overall diversity, this disc proves to be a true "experimental cure for the spoonfed masses." Limited to 1,000 hand-numbered copies! Features the new *Decibel* band *Machine That Flashes*, also *Wage Class Slave*, *Wrack Process*, & *Separate Faith*. (Featured in *Outburn* #3)



DICHOIC MIRROR - Nocturnal Garden (Mesmeric) \$14

Dichroic Mirror's long awaited and outstanding new release, *Nocturnal Garden*, is a mesmeric emotional roller coaster of haunting guitars and sorrow filled female vocals. From the Eastern beauty of "Aswand" and the noise wall of "Storm of Tears" to the hypnotic darkness of "Beyond the Door" and the orchestral death waltz of "Danse Mordibe," *Nocturnal Garden* is a glimmering and beautiful expedition into melancholic gothic rock. (Featured in *Outburn* #2 & #3)

HALOMAKER - Suffer This Wish (Outburn) \$12

A progressive journey into the depths of a distorted soul and heavy sound. Utilizing electronics, feedback, and guitars, Halomaker breaks the boundaries in a blur of industrial, gothic, and noise with 11 introspective songs on this debut release. (Featured in *Outburn* #3)

HALOMAKER - Self-Infected Creep (Outburn) \$12

With increased precision and production, *Self-Infected Creep* is fueled by sonic power, intense anger, and inner decay. A collision of programmed electronics, chaotic percussion, and whip-cracking guitars, *Self-Infected Creep* will attack your senses and overload your mind. Scheduled for release this October, *Self-Infected Creep* will feature the artwork of Eric Dinyer (Wax Trax's *Black Box* & *Chainsuck* releases and *Outburn* #3's cover).

NOVEL:

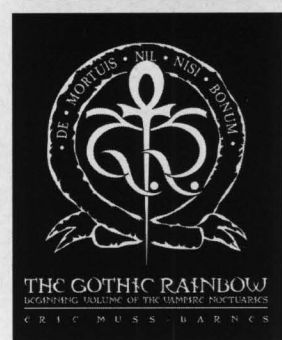
THE GOTHIC RAINBOW:

Beginning Volume of the Vampire Nocturnaries by Eric Muss Barnes \$18

"If you've ever listened to The Cure in the dark, danced to The Dead Milkmen, lost a loved one, hung out with skaters, hated your parents or hated preppies, or if anyone's ever called you a 'freak,' I think you'll find a little of yourself in this book."

- Cynthia Conlin, *Implosion Magazine*

(Excerpts and interview on page 28 of this issue!)



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Octavia,
I must say that your magazine is absolutely superb, the best and most professional publication I have seen. I do mean that! I would like to thank you for the review/write-up [of *Cyberpuncture*] in *Outburn*. I liked the way you wrote "crawling out of the snowy mountains of Colorado," quite original, as I myself love the snow and the mountains; however, I don't believe many of my "comrades" would agree. Honestly, this publication has further motivated me. There are literally hundreds of great bands/talents in this genre and the ideas and music are beautiful and strong. Your magazine has opened a floodgate for so much neglected talent and has created a common ground for bands on many levels and styles to network.

— M. Watson, SEPARATE FAITH

Dearest Octavia,
Once again you have surpassed yourselves. This one looks wonderful. What a change. You are not succumbing to tradition and staying with the regular style of zines in our scene. It was also nice to read about some people I know in their own words. We are booking a tour of the East Coast for this summer. That is the newest news. We also have added a permanent violinist and Joe plays the Tablas for most of the show now. We have become semi-acoustic. We place Oriental rugs about and perform what we call a more intimate show. Anyway, thanks so much for all the wonderful help and support.

— Denny, SOFIA RUN

I wanted to say that I thought *Texture's* interview with Godflesh in *Outburn* #3 was great and that *Outburn* in general is easily one of the best zines I've ever seen in my life, you guys do an incredible job!

— Sean McKnight, RELAPSE

P R O F I L E S The Artists and Photographers of Outburn #4

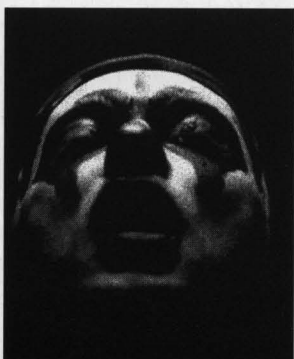


T.J. BARRIAL (213)701-1898

T.J. has recently photographed portraits for such bands as Collide and Spahn Ranch. He went on tour this summer as the official promotional photographer for Lollapalooza.

STEPHANIE DEAN (510)769-9557

I like to work with textures, sometimes scratching my negatives to get a certain effect. I print all my own work (color & b/w) so it gives me a lot of control over each surface, film print, light, and color. I do everything from studio shots to found footage. But when it comes down to it, I'm all about beauty and instant gratification.



ROBERT GREGORY GRIFFETH (770)579-3482

See interview on page 16

ANTHONY PIDGEON (510)654-0924

Anthony Pidgeon is an editorial photographer known for his ability to create images that bring to light the intangible essence and depth of his subjects, and his sensitivity and skill in translating these moments into tangible visual atmospheres. Recent projects include two statutory calendars to be released this fall for 1998, CD and promo projects with various labels including MCA, Cargo, Tomcat, Popsmeat, and Basia records, reference photography for the upcoming graphic novel *Gustav Vampyre*, and ongoing live concert coverage as a house photographer for The Fillmore in San Francisco.



TONDALAYA (614)864-1630

Tondalaya will be graduating soon with a degree in photography and plans to pursue professional work. She's been a long time fan of Lycia, and through fortunate circumstances had the opportunity to photograph them for *Outburn*.



RODENT EK (310)915-7668

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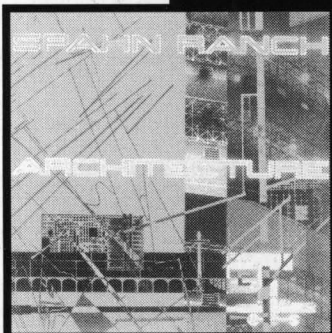


Some people say we're nuts.

but we know we're just rivetheads

spann ranch

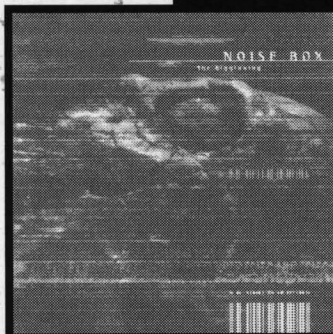
architecture



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noise box

the beginning



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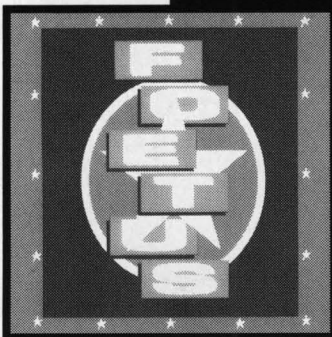
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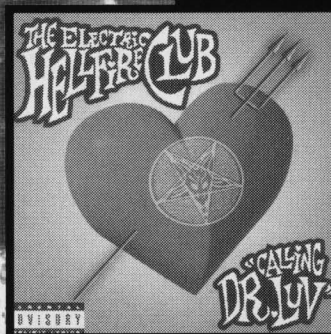
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ASHKELON SAIN • DAWN WAGNER
TRANCE TO THE SUN
INTERVIEW BY OCTAVIA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OCTAVIA & RODENT EK

After the sudden departure of long-time vocalist Zoe at the end of a grueling tour last year, Trance to the Sun has re-formed with a new singer and fresh vigor. The dynamic vocals of Dawn Wagner now accompany Ashkelon's compositions. Trance to the Sun may have had a psychotic undertone before, but the new music is taking a bolder turn into dementia. It's the beauty and sorrow of insanity that is expressed in the lyrics and music. Ashkelon's goal is to create something beautiful that has never been heard before. With Ashkelon's musical tastes ranging from Black Sabbath to Saint Etienne and on to Brazilian jazz, and Dawn's love of Diamanda Galas and Skinny Puppy, the music is understandably innovative. Part of their unusual sound arises from Arabian and Indian scales applied to Bach's theories on melodies and counter points with Ashkelon's sitar influenced guitar. To complete the sound Ashkelon says he, "composes solid and complex bass parts" and he "tries to give the drum machine a live sound."

Trance to the Sun are releasing an EP called *Delirious* and a full length CD called *Equinox* which will feature distinctly different songs from each other. "Delirious contains songs that seemed like they were better suited to be listened to in a short span of time and had more mood changes, while *Equinox* has a lot of long tracks with consistent moods that tie together in a broader way. The songs on *Equinox* are evil and wilder," says Ashkelon.

Dawn has a beautifully moving voice that at times screams with fury and pain. Her charismatic persona caught the attention of Ashkelon when he was on tour. Dawn's one woman electronic project, Scarlet Slipping, opened for Trance to the Sun in her hometown of Sioux City, Iowa. Ashkelon was so impressed with her performance, that as soon as Zoe left the band, he knew he wanted Dawn to sing in Trance to the Sun. Ashkelon told her, "If you can get to California, I'll record your stuff for dirt cheap." And when she did, he said, "She took two days to record 10 songs." Dawn respects the history of Trance to the Sun and is excited to keep the vision alive and moving forward. She emphasizes it is still Trance to the Sun, but they do admit the music has changed. Ashkelon explains, "Dawn's singing has altered Trance to the Sun quite a bit. She sings crystal clear lyrics that are meant to be understood, so I have to accommodate that. Whereas Zoe sang atmospheric, so her voice became like an instrument, and the whole thing came off as ambient. Dawn's vocals are very lyrical, and by virtue of that they come across like songs more in the first place."

Ashkelon began his own record label, Ambulancia, to give him greater control over his releases. But he's also found that, "Financially it's devastating having your own label, unless you're selling a lot. There's a really long lag time from when the money starts to come back. I do everything, Dawn helps me though. There's a lot to do." Ashkelon also spends a lot of time touring and has learned, "It's the third week on tour that you go insane. If you can get through that, the rest will be fine." He continues, "To be in a band at this level you have to work your ass off. It's not enough to play good music, you have to do all the things to get it out there. You've got to be willing to starve and sleep in your car. For any band to achieve anything it's 40% because the music is good and 60% because of how much work they put into it, and make themselves available. That takes a lot of energy and dedication...it's hard."

Ashkelon moved to the beautiful coast of Santa Barbara, CA to study West African and Indian music, and decided to stay after obtaining his four year music degree. He says, "The only thing that's keeping me in Santa Barbara is this great house I'm living in." With a blood red kitchen, a purple and gold living room, and holes in the bathroom floor, it has been described as Pippi Longstocking's house. Built by Chinese immigrants around the turn of the century, this historic house will probably collapse in the next earthquake...but until then, Ashkelon enjoys living in such a unique house.

Dawn's solo project, Scarlet Slipping, will be the first non-Trance to the Sun release on Ambulancia, due out this fall. Ashkelon describes her music as, "quite synthetic with a lot of light and schizophrenic mood-swings." He may also release *Empire Club*, which is the work of his former keyboardist, Lucian S. Donato. Trance to the Sun's releases include *Equinox*, *Delirious*, *Venomous Eve*, *Bloom Flowers*, *Bloom!*, and *Ghost Forest* which are available through Ambulancia and Etherhaus. X

FROM THE STREETS OF NEW YORK TO THE DEPTHS OF ELECTRONIC DARKNESS, KHZ WILL SEDUCE YOU WITH THEIR UNIQUE ATMOSPHERES, ATTITUDE, AND SULTRY COME-HITHER VOCALS. PART MAN, PART MACHINE, AND ALL ANGST, KHZ FUEL THEIR FIRST SELF-FULFILLING RELEASE, *CYROGENIC SLEEP*, WITH PASSION AND EXPERIENCE.

How long have the three of you been working together?

DENNY: It will be two years in August. Pull and Raiana have known each other for a while. I met the two of them through a mutual friend. Pretty much the three of us hate each other...only kidding! We get along really well.

Do you feel a kinship towards any one particular music scene?

PULL: We're a combination of everything that's out there. I don't think any of us consider ourselves into industrial or gothic, but because of the dark overtones, it appeals to all of us. Influences for most people, influence them and they sound a certain way...I think we had the opposite approach. We went in deciding NOT to do certain things. If anything it was just liberating. We don't discount any genre. We just found out that we are getting a review in a hip hop magazine. It definitely shocked us. As far as playing live goes, as long as the audience is into what we do, we don't care who we play with. We just don't want to be mixed in with some punk bands where they're going to be slam dancing all night.

DENNY: We're starting to book more live shows than we have been. We're trying to hook up with bands that are somewhat similar, but we end up playing with bands that are totally on the other end of the spectrum.

Any reason why you covered "Fly on the Windscreen" by Depeche Mode?

RAIANA: That was my idea. I grew up listening to Depeche Mode and that was one of my favorite songs. We thought it was definitely a good idea to cover a song, so I chose that one and everyone dug it.

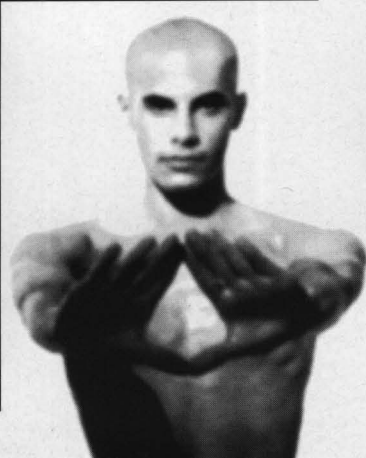
Your version is more elegant, textural, and has a much sleeker feel to it, than the original ever did.

PULL: I take that as a big compliment because we all discussed doing remakes—they only go one of two ways: either you destroy the song and everybody hates you for doing it or hopefully you take it to another place...not try and re-do what's been done.

Raiana's vocals fall between a seductive vulnerability and an upfront attitude.

RAIANA: I think that's just sort of my style, and depending on the music...it usually inspires the way I'm going to convey the song. It always ends up being a balance.

PULL: What Raiana brings to the music is



PULL · RAIANA PAIGE · DENNY BRUNELLE

KHZ

INTERVIEW BY RODENT EK

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BENJAMIN OLIVER

her vocal style which is very much true to her personality. The way she approaches a song...she has all those different parts to her personality.

On *Cryogenic Sleep* the vocals aren't overused, you're not hit over the head with them...they're nicely spaced out.

DENNY: I think that was production wise, because Raiana wanted to sing over everything.

PULL: You can tell Denny's the clown.

For an electronic band, the lyrics are personally revealing which a lot of other bands don't attempt.

PULL: When you mix a singer/songwriter with the electronic world, like what we're doing, it confuses the shit out of everybody. I'm very much an electronic person, but I never want to lose sight of the human side of it. The machines are only as good as the people working them.

DENNY: I think that's why he has me sticking around to play bass...so he could have a live instrument.

PULL: The truth is our variety comes out of our need to mix metal with flesh. I think electronic music completely on its own has a tendency to be a little stale. I don't use a computer like most other people do. I use one of the earliest prototypes of sequencers because of the human feel to it. I'll work on something totally electronic and then Denny and Raiana will come in and completely turn it into something else. They give it that human feeling that I personally love.

Aside from music, are there any other experiences that have contributed to the band?

DENNY: Yeah, we're fucking pissed!

PULL: That's where a lot of the overtones of the music come from. It's not a new story. So many artists and musicians mention it, but we don't like the industry...we don't like the way it's handled. With the three of us being in the music business as long as we have, there's a lot of frustration, and a decent amount of anger that helped add to our sound.

How do you balance that by not lashing out at the very people who may be able to help you the most?

PULL: We've been in it long enough to know not to bite the hand that feeds you. So as artists we're able to get our anger and frustration out in our music. We try and separate it. We feel for anybody in the arts who is trying to do what they believe in and something corporate is holding them down. Right now we're dealing with what has to do with us...if we ever got to a position of power there's a lot of other causes, a lot of things out there that we do believe in and would like to make a difference in, but

we have to start with what's in our backyard. ✕



THE DEBUT FULL LENGTH RELEASE BY KHZ, *CYROGENIC SLEEP* (SEE REVIEW ON PAGE 40), AND *THE EP* ARE BOTH AVAILABLE FROM PROPAIN.

WITH THE RELEASE OF *deGENERATE*, THEIR THIRD CD ON CLEOPATRA, KILL SWITCH...KLICK HAVE BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH BOTH SEATTLE AND THE ENTIRE ELECTRO-INDUSTRIAL SCENE. DESPITE SEATTLE'S GRUNGE SPAWNING, LATTE DRINKING REPUTATION, dA (DEVIN ALEXANDER) SEBASTIAN'S ELECTRONIC WIZARDRY WILL MOVE YOUR BODY AS WELL AS YOUR MIND.

How does the Kill Switch...Klick studio sound differ from a live performance?

On stage it's Mike Ditmore on drums, Jeremy Moss on bass, and me singing, playing slambar, percussion, and other mischievous things. But in the studio, it's just me with occasional guest musicians. Things go faster when I work alone...I've been doing it that way for so long now, it would be hard to imagine it any other way. The studio sound is like a blueprint...the live sound is more aggressive, more haphazard. There's a certain energy playing live that pushes the music, you know the audience and adrenaline factor. Mistakes get made, but when we're on stage we don't try for this anal perfection...we are conveying feelings and attitude.

Tell me about the development of *deGenerate*.

We had been performing some of the songs like "Sides Bottom" and "Shitkicker" since last year, so it felt good getting those songs out as well as experimenting with a few new directions. *deGenerate* is heavy and dark, but still has a groove...which being a bassist is important to me. Eric and Dara from Faith and Disease contributed to the song "Eventually" which is the most ambient cut on the disc. And I mixed *deGenerate* on headphones...so I was able to pay close attention to detail. There's a lot of little parts floating in and out and odd panning effects.

Your newsletter is called "No Guitar" and it's also written on all of your releases. Have you got something against guitars?

I hate them! I really feel the guitar is the most overused instrument of all time, and that's why I don't use them. I can play guitar as well as most rhythm players...so its not an envious thing. I just refuse to own one. I've also had many fights with guitarists...I hate that Malmsteenesque "I can play faster than you" shit. That's not about music...that's about someone's ego.

S **Wit**

But a lot of the instrumentation on *deGenerate* sounds like guitar.

If my bass or slambar ends up sounding a bit like a guitar when they are put through a distortion pedal that's just the way it is. I am not trying to imitate guitarists...that's a dead end street.

Since your cover of "Dark Entries" is on Cleopatra's tribute CD, has Bauhaus been a major influence?

Yeah, Bauhaus is still one of my favorite bands. In the early 80's I was a Punk and it was Bauhaus, Killing Joke, and PiL that showed me that there was musical life after Punk. Bauhaus was so artistic yet heavy at the same time. Peter Murphy was such a crooner in the vein of Bowie. I really believe he helped bring back that style of singing. I don't know if I did "Dark Entries" any justice, but I sincerely tried.

Besides other musicians, is there anything else that influences your song writing?

I read a lot. I'm right in the middle of *Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson. I like the Cyber-punk stuff...I'm a big fan of Bruce Sterling and William Gibson. For the type of music I do, it seems an obvious influence. I also like Kerouac, especially his poetry. I have Buddhist tendencies and his *Scripture of the Golden Eternity* is a constant source of inspiration. I also do constructive sculpture, using pieces of plastic junk and PVC pipe. It's not so much an influence as another creative outlet. Sometimes when the music isn't flowing, I'll work on a sculpture...it's like Liquid Drano; it flushes me out.

The new song "Meth" is obviously about drug abuse. Is that from your own personal experiences?

I am a recovered alcoholic and have done my time with meth amphetamine and other controlled substances. "Meth" was specifically about the paranoid aspects of the drug and the spiritual substitute any addiction can be. I used to live for malt liquor and speed. I would basically push myself into a paranoiac stupor. The more you do meth, the harder it becomes to stop. I've had many friends turn into total freaks through excessive, prolonged use...and they stay that way forever. It's such a waste of what could be a productive life. I'm not preaching...I know people are curious and have to find things out for themselves, but there is something to be said for sobriety. I've been sober for over 5 years, and curiously enough, as soon as I got a handle on my addictions, Kill Switch...Klick came together, my music started flowing, and I realized my life wasn't the fucking mess I always thought it was.

I've heard your side project One Minute Endless. How did that come about?

I had accumulated many un-Kill Switch...Klick pieces. After some thought, I decided to put them on a disc with a few new songs written especially for One Minute Endless. Most of it is a collection of left over tracks...so there's a certain lack of focus, but it gives it a particular flavor. The best thing about One Minute Endless was that after I decided to put it out on my own label, writing the new songs was very liberating. I didn't feel the pressure of creating a release for an audience other than myself.

So what's in the musical future for you?

I heard Jaz from Killing Joke is writing symphonies now...so I guess anything is possible. I do have some mild classical aspirations. I would like to write at least one symphony before I die, but I'm way too busy with Kill Switch...Klick to think about it now. Both "Mania" and "The Transient Ballet" from One Minute Endless were classical piano experiments...and I intend to write more when I have the time. X



ch...kill click

dA SEBASSTIAN
KILL SWITCH...CLICK
INTERVIEW BY RYAN ZUGOVOK



KILL SWITCH...CLICK HAVE THREE RELEASES ON CLEOPATRA: *deGENERATE*, *ODDITIES AND VERSIONS*, AND *BEAT IT TO FIT, PAINT IT TO MATCH*. ONE MINUTE ENDLESS CAN BE HEARD ON THE *ALLEVIATION* COMPILATION. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON dA SEBASSTIAN'S NUMEROUS SIDE PROJECTS AND KILL SWITCH...CLICK'S COMPILATION APPEARANCES, CONTACT INDVSTA MVSIC.

THE CHANGELINGS
INTERVIEW BY OCTAVIA
PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLYSON FRYE



INFLUENCED BY THE TIME-HONORED STYLES OF INDIAN RAGAS, WALTZES, AND HEBREW PRAYER-CHANTS, THE CHANGELINGS BRING TRADITIONAL MUSICAL ELEMENTS INTO A MODERN CONTEXT OF ETHEREAL BEAUTY. THEIR INGENUOUSLY CRAFTED COMPOSITIONS OF CHARMING VIOLIN MELODIES, MESMERIZING RHYTHMS, AND DEEPLY MOVING VOCALS WILL LIFT YOUR SPIRIT AND TRANSPORT YOU INTO A LUSH LANDSCAPE OF SPLENDOR AND CALMNESS. THE TALE OF THE CHANGELINGS BEGAN WITH THE END OF TRIO NOCTURNA, NICK AND REGEANA'S FORMER BAND, AND A FEW WELL PLACED ADVERTISEMENTS IN A LOCAL MAGAZINE.

T H E C H A N G E L I N G S

NICK PAGAN — KEYBOARDS

"I really like baroque, Bach, and Vivaldi, and also 60s music. You ever hear of The Zombies? It's an old mod group ... like The Who, The Kinks, and The Yardbirds. It's not a discernible influence in our music, but there is that pop sensibility. My contribution is to keep us from getting too droney with a lot of chord changes and a little pop structure to make it more accessible."

"Even though we're all into traditional types of music, we're all big believers in effects and electronics. They're just tools to achieve your end. Both the violin and guitar go through effects units. Chandler uses a drum machine. I play synthesizers, and Regeana sings through delays and choruses. We're very open to technology and how it can make things better, we're not close-minded traditionalists."

PAUL MERCER — VIOLIN

"This is the first time I've been in a band. I've been playing since I was 8. I was really obsessed with it since I was 16 or 17, but I never really thought I'd end up playing with other musicians. I played with chamber ensembles, and I played solo performances straight baroque and classical compositions. I always figured I'd end up writing music somehow...filmtracks or something, but never thought about joining a band. I just stumbled across their ad. It listed that they didn't want a rock musician...that they were looking for someone into a lot of bands that I respected like The Velvet Underground. That's how I hooked up with Nick and Regeana. It was a shock to find other musicians that I could really work with. I've been a really improvisational player all my life, but I didn't think I'd find other musicians who wanted to play the same kind of music I did."

"I'm very influenced by Paganini, and a lot of the early romantic composers. I think Nick and I come together a lot whenever he starts banging away on harpsichord, because we'll do harpsichord/violin stuff that makes us happy. It sounds very 17th century, and that's really where I'm happiest. I have a strong connection with European music of the 17th and 18th centuries. I'd like to see modern music with more influences than just 20th century. I like a lot of what's going on now especially with electronica. It looks like people are becoming open to more and more influences."

REGEANA MORRIS — VOICE, HAMMERED DULCIMER

"I sang a lot with other kids growing up, and in chorus all through High School. I sang with the Madrigal singers and the large university chorus at Georgia State for a while. I was looking in the local paper for some sort of situation where I could sing. It was hopeless, everyone just wanted some kind of back-up singer, or bluesy singer, or some kind of southern rock thing. It was pretty bleak looking. I'd given up looking in the paper. And then a friend told me there was an ad for Trio Nocturna in the paper. So I called and turned out being very happy."

"I really enjoyed singing Madrigals and 16th century songs. Miranda Sex Garden was really influential. I love Nick Cave, PJ Harvey, The Velvet Underground, The Orb, Chemical Brothers...older 4AD stuff. I've loved Dead Can Dance since I can remember."

"We write all our parts ourselves, so most of our songs come out of a big blender with all of us throwing in our ideas in until something solidifies. The lyrics are sort of like a Polaroid picture ...they start getting clearer as the song progresses. Eventually, I'll start singing the same thing over and over. I think it's mostly a stream of conscious thing really. 'Halloween' and 'Earthquake at Versi' were both Paul's ideas. He wanted to have a song called 'Earthquake at Versi' because he liked the image, so I just wrote the lyrics around the image of an earthquake there."



THE CHANGELINGS HAVE TWO RELEASES: THEIR SELF TITLED DEBUT ON WORLD SERPENT AND THEIR NEW CD, *TERRA FIRMA* ON MIDDLESEX.

G E L L I N G S

CHANDLER RENTZ — PERCUSSION, BASS

"I played in a band called Shepherds of Hot Pavement, and various other no-name bands, and had done stuff on my own occasionally. I'm into things like Slowdive, and a lot of the British shoe-gazer style that got ridiculed and slapped off the market like it was the plague. I like certain parts of world music like Egyptian and Iranian music. Then I like certain types of dance music...trancey type stuff."

Nick: We weren't going to have a drummer, but everybody hated everything I programmed on drum machine. So I said, "OK Damon, we'll take an ad out for a drummer, we won't find one, and you'll be satisfied with my drum machine programs."

Damon: We had a pretty good ethereal sound going. I think that's part of our magic. It was pretty solid before he ever came on board, and then the new influence just soars it to another level.

Chandler: The drumming style I have with the band is very world sounding.

DAMON YOUNG — GUITAR, TANPURA, SITAR

"I started playing a lot of classical guitar and acoustic guitar growing up. I used to do a lot of music on my own...personal recordings. I really liked Trio Nocturna. That was the only local band that I liked. I knew that things were falling apart with them, but I still didn't think about trying out. I didn't know if I'd fit or not. I do a lot of cross picking and things like that. A friend urged me to try out, and it really seemed to work."

Nick: He was the only guitarist who auditioned that didn't drown out the keyboard. He didn't use distortion.

Damon: The acoustic feel went well with it too. It all depends on what the song needs. Sometimes it's more of an acoustic classical sound, and other times we want to do a really washy rich Cocteau Twins kind of guitar.

"Most of us like Dead Can Dance and those sorts of bands. The Middle Eastern thing has been really big with me, and I feel that I've helped bring some of that in the band. Instead of trying to play around with the Sitar, I ended up getting a teacher who is really into it and has got me into studying Hindu style music. Raga is very deep. I've just barely scratched the surface. The farther you get into it, the more you learn about the complexity. The structure is fascinating, the combination of improvisation with very particular ways of playing depending on the Raga. We ended up actually playing Ragas with these Afghan musicians. It went over really well. Paul began picking up a lot of the micro-tone slidings and things, and we realized Regeana is almost singing Raga. She's developed her own style by intuition. Which is sort of the way their music developed hundreds of years ago. I thought it was fascinating that she just slipped right into this type of music. The influence has really become apparent to me and it's nice to be able to do some songs that have that Indian feel, because it's such a beautiful spiritual music."

With an army of releases out in Europe, only two of Sielwolf's powerful albums, *Metastasen* and *Magnum Force*, have made it to America. Ranging from heavy industrial noise to innovative atmospheres, Sielwolf's music is creative, chaotic, and chilling. Sielwolf, German for a machine in the sewer that cleans the dirt out of water, may not be palatable for mass consumption, but many will love their thunderingly intense sound that dredges out the filth of life with all its pain, depression, and fears.

Petra and Peter, the German duo behind the music, were taking their second vacation to the US, to visit such places as Las Vegas and Venice Beach, when I had the opportunity to speak with them. She's a trained psychologist who brings a moody side to the music, and he's the practical joker who provides the light (or dark) hearted entertainment for the audience. Petra currently works at a clinic in their hometown of Frankfurt where she counsels drug addicts and plans on going back to school to get a higher degree in psychology. Peter, on the other hand, has held a wide variety of jobs. Together they create some of the most intense music I've heard. For them, **"The music is a way of getting rid of aggressions and feelings in general,"** says Petra. One of the bands they respect the most is Swans. Peter elaborates, **"Our lyrics are similar to theirs [Swans]. In German they may be a bit**

more complicated to understand, but the meanings are similar...more personal and psychological. Not like the EBM clichés."

Much of Sielwolf's music contains samples from intellectual horror movies like those of David Cronenberg or Stanley Kubrick. The samples are often German voice-overs to English spoken movies which sound strange in the German translation. Although they use a lot of movie samples Petra explains, **"The lyrics have nothing to do with the horror films we used in the beginning. We used the samples to illustrate aspects of communication through television."**

Sielwolf have toured extensively in Germany, Belgium, and Holland and have played with such diverse acts as The Young Gods, Meat Beat Manifesto, Test Dept., Die Form, and Rich Kids on LSD. On stage Petra controls the keyboards while Peter screams the vocals and entertains the audience during the instrumentals. To complete the live experience, Sielwolf members include a live bass player, drummer, and guitarist. Petra describes the live show by saying, **"We do performance art on stage. On one tour we had an aquarium on stage and filled**

it with water and Peter put his head in the water as long as possible. For us it was important to bring out the visual effects, because we sample from movies so much."

The music of Sielwolf is constantly growing and changing. **"I'm interested in new electronic music,"** says Peter. In particular he likes some of the drum and bass music that has gotten **"harder and very complicated."** He continues, **"Maybe that will influence the next record."** But Sielwolf is not likely to go completely electronic, as Petra proclaims, **"I'm still interested in guitar music. I like guitar more."** On their two American releases, *Metastasen* and *Magnum Force*, many of the songs toggle between intensely harsh songs and atmospheric soundscapes. For the new material Peter asserts, **"Now we will mix it together so that the songs are not one hard and one soft."**

When asked about the differences between Germans and Americans, Petra responded with, **"I think that the mentality is different."** She feels Americans are much more relaxed in their everyday conversations and don't really want to delve into problems. While Germans will **"analyze everything."** Peter explains that Germans are always searching for the underlying problems that must be there. He also says that Europeans are **"very big on image."** Petra was surprised by the friendliness of a woman she met at Kontrol Fatory, an Industrial club in Los Angeles. **"I went to the toilet and there was this gothic woman who was white and pale, and looked scary. I came in and she said, 'Hello, how are you?' She was very friendly. We wouldn't have that in Germany. If you find a person like that in Germany, she wouldn't talk to you at all. They say, 'I am a goth,' and then they behave like one. They do everything to play the part and are not open minded."** ✂

METASTASEN AND *MAGNUM FORCE* ARE BOTH AVAILABLE IN THE US FROM VAN RICHTER. *NACHSTROM* IS PLANNED FOR US RELEASE THIS YEAR.



S I E L W O L F

PETER PROCHIR • PETRA TAUSENDPFUND
SIELWOLF
 INTERVIEW BY OCTAVIA
 PHOTOGRAPHS BY T.J. BARRIAL

SELWOLF TIMELINE

1 9 7 9

Peter was a drummer in the only Punk band in Frankfurt. When Petra met him she wanted to play the drums too.

1 9 8 4

Peter, Petra, and a few other members formed *Collectionism*: an experimental, performance art based band influenced by the ambient sounds of Brian Eno.

1 9 8 5 - 8 8

Peter and Petra formed their own band, called Der Riss (The Cut). They began to include vocals and experimented with a harder sound.

1 9 8 9

Sielwolf was formed and their first release, *Paralyzed Voice* was a sample laden EP with "typical eerie electronic things." In order to play live Peter and Petra added a bass player, drummer, and guitarist.

1 9 9 0 - 9 1

Sielwolf was their first full length album which had no vocals, only samples.

1 9 9 2

Magnum Force was released on Cash Beat just two weeks after Ministry's *Psalm 69* came out. Everyone thought the release was trying to copy Ministry, when in fact the timing was just a coincidence. The violent aggressive clichés and horror movie samples were meant to be tongue-in-cheek.

1 9 9 3

Nachstrom was released in Europe and will be released in the US this year by Van Richter which will feature previously unavailable tracks.

1 9 9 4

Metastasen was a more personal and introverted album. The domestic release includes tracks from their *Beweglich Animalisch* EP. One is a Lassigue Bendthaus Mix of that song, and the other is a Nirvana Edit that was coincidentally finished two weeks before Kurt Cobain killed himself.

1 9 9 6

IV, released on Kk, is a more experimental and dark album featuring the philosophical musings of Charles Bukowski (*Bar Fly*) taken from a documentary about him. Mick Harris of Scorn produced the album.

1 9 9 7

V The Remixes, also on Kk, features remixes of songs from *IV*.



PERFECT

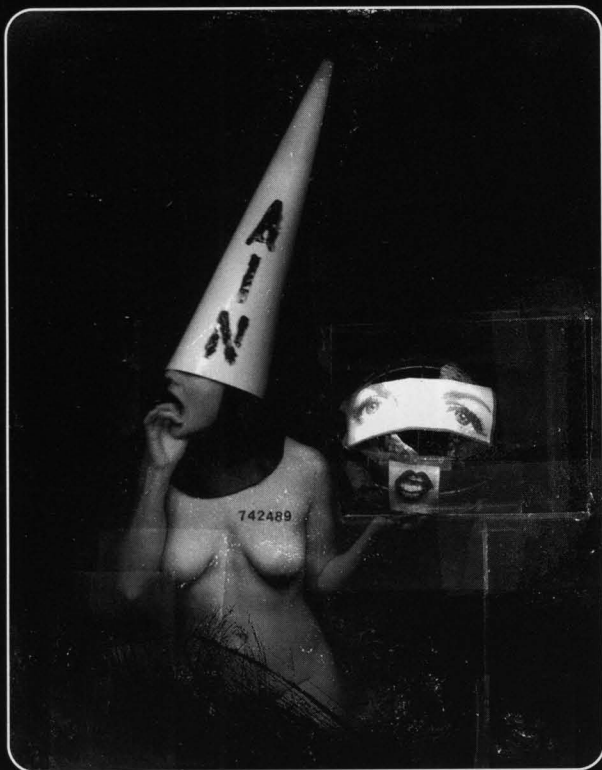


LISTENING FOR LIES

THE PRESSURE AND PAIN OF ROBERT GREGORY GRIFFETH'S PHOTOGRAPHY IS CLEARLY SEEN AND FELT. ENTER HIS WORLD OF EXTREMITIES, CHAOS, AND CUTTINGS. FROM THE DARKEST REACHES TO THE SUBTLE SOFTNESS, BLACK AND WHITE, DAY OR NIGHT, THE ARTWORK OF ROBERT GREGORY GRIFFETH WILL FOREVER HAUNT YOU.

ROBERT GREGORY GRIFFETH
INTERVIEW BY RODENT EK

R Y G R i f f e t



THE PUPPET SHOW

ROBERT GREGORY GRIFFETH
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What's your background and how did you get started in photography?

I didn't train anywhere...I didn't go to school. I just mainly learned how to shoot from working around people that shot stuff, but it was nothing like what I'm doing now. I don't really know how to answer that. I just happened upon it. What I'm doing now, I mainly learned out of books and watching documentaries on television. That's how I learned how to do stuff.

Since most of your work is cut and collaged together, do you have a pre-conceived idea of what the end results will be when you are on the initial photo shoot?

Sometimes I have an idea and it actually turns out like that. It happens maybe 50% of the time. The other 50% is left over work that I pick up and something just falls out of it. It's hard to say. Sometimes I do have an idea of what I want to do, and sometimes I don't, and a lot of times when I don't have an idea it works out better. A lot of times images come out like "Listening for Lies." That just came out of a bunch of negatives laying there. Usually I just sit down and try and do stuff and it never works out.

So it's all just part of your process?

I just have more control to do what I want to do. It's almost like painting...you can take images from everywhere, and you can create what you want to. Where just shooting a picture, you're limited by your subject matter of what you can do. That's why I do a lot of stuff after that. I can just shoot something really basic and just add upon it as much as I want to. Take away from it as much as I want to and get what I need out of that.

According to your bio, you've done a short film. Is that something you're interested in pursuing and how did it turn out compared to your print work?

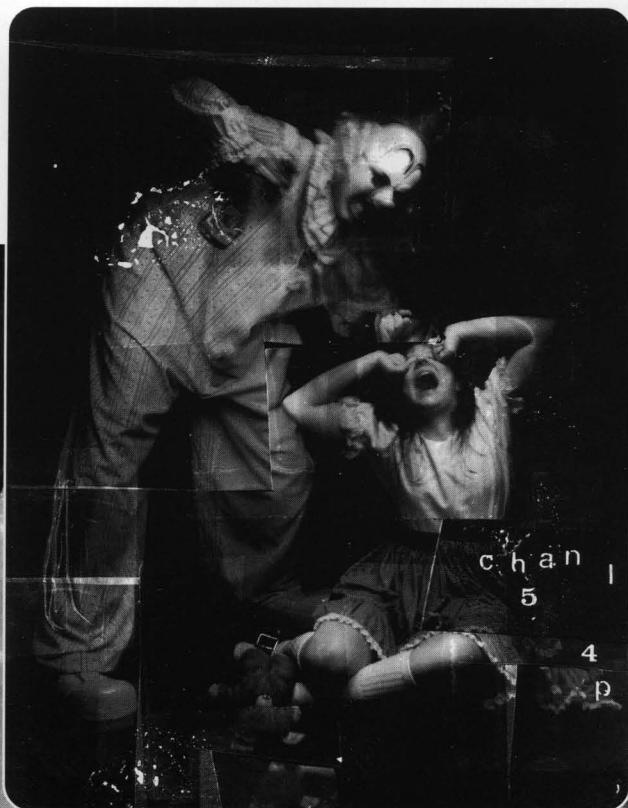
It's different, and I probably would get into that more, but I just became really reclusive for a while. It's hard to do a film when you don't know anybody. Right now I'm just sticking to the photographs and putting the focus and attention on that instead of going into something else I'm not really sure about.

Is it hard being an artist and having reclusive tendencies?

It's kind of hard when you want to shoot people, but you don't want to talk to them. That's really difficult. But I sort of passed through that little phase I was in, and I'm back out doing things like this...getting people to work with me.

Are most of the subjects in your photographs friends or acquaintances? What do they think of what you're doing and how you're having them pose for you?

Well, the first part of it...are they friends or acquaintances, it's usually yeah. And the second part of it...a lot of times they really don't care what I'm doing. They're just average normal people that just want to be in a picture sometimes...it's weird how that works, but that might have been part of my problem that I've had over the past few years. I haven't really communicated with a lot of people that understand what I'm doing or really care about it. So it's just like I'm sort of in my own little world...not having a lot of feedback. I'm just sort of doing whatever I felt like doing. A lot of times that's good because you don't get any negative feedback, but when you don't get



any positive feedback either it's like well...why am I doing what I'm doing? It's a lot of pressure on you to figure out if you want to keep doing it or not.

You told us you just wanted to shoot some work and have it be seen. Have you done work on a different professional level that was uncomfortable? I just want to do what I want to do, and I just want to have people see it. When galleries get involved, they want to try and control it or push a direction, or publications have art directors that want to give you ideas or whatever. I don't have anything against that. A lot of times it's good to have that, but I just don't work well in that situation. After a long time of wondering why I'm not happy doing what I'm doing...that was the reason.

Most of the work I do professionally as a designer is art directed to death by people who lack any sort of vision. So one of my goals with Outburn is to give the musicians, artists, and writers their own voice. The work that excites me is something that the artist believes in and doesn't think that in a million years anyone would ever want to use it. That's the kind of stuff that I'd like to see. If it conveys some sort of personal meaning or unique message that comes from the artist...that's what's important.

Yeah, I don't know what to say to that. Like I said before...I've just really come to my senses of understanding why I'm doing and what direction I want to go. When you've got ten different people going "you should do this or you should do that" and then you're thinking "well if I do this somebody might buy it, this publication might want to use me," and then you do stuff and they don't give a shit anyway. It's like why even worry about it anymore. I'm just going to do what I do and forget about it.

The one thing I've noticed in your work is that there's always a soft elegant human quality, but then the photograph is manipulated into almost threatening or ominous overtones.

Um...yeah.

How do these dark themes relate to your personal life and your personality? Is it an outlet or a reflection of a hidden part of you?

It's probably an outlet and a reflection. Everybody probably has a lot of problems. Just being in an environment that's not very supportive and helpful...that's just how I see things, and I grew up watching television. All that stuff feeds into you constantly. I just see things in that dark sense even though personally I'm not like that. I was talking to this girl on the phone today. I talked to her about being in my art and she had no concept of what I did, and I understand that now. People just see me and don't relate me with what I do and what I feel and what I see. I just relate a different side of me with my art.

One of the challenges I face with my music...it's almost like this hidden persona that's forced out lyrically and musically. You see me on the street and I'm short, quiet and very introverted...you wouldn't ever think I'd be screaming my lungs out with my music.

Oh yeah. I'm very quiet. That's why I don't shoot as many people as I do. I just don't feel comfortable asking anybody to be in my pictures. Once they know who I am and what I do, it's completely different than me just walking up and going, hey I do this. I just don't do it. I can't do it. I don't attempt to.

It's always a big hurdle to try and re-explain yourself to people who may or may not even understand.

Right, and I'm not really that good at explaining myself much less what I'm doing...which is a totally different part of me, which only comes out when I do those images.

Well, it seems like you've had a lot of success in gallery shows and work in some smaller magazines. Is that something you actively pursue? A lot of that stuff just happens. I think the magazine work might have gotten a bit bigger if I had been more cooperative with people. It would be great to go out and shoot and get paid a bunch of money, but I just want to do what I want to do. If I have an outlet for people to see it, then I'm happy. It's not really good to do a bunch of stuff and have it sitting around a room and look at it yourself for three years and finally burn it.

Do you feel like you're part of the so-called artistic or photographic community?

No, not at all. I don't really know any artists. I haven't really known any, and I really



DREAM GIRL

haven't related to any...I just don't fit in with that. There's probably people I do fit in with, but we'll probably never meet each other because we're all the same way I guess.

I thought when I went into graphic design I would be a part of this design community and feel like a part of a larger profession, but what I've come to discover in the past few years...I don't want to have anything to do with professional graphic design. I feel that I have nothing in common with the majority of designers...which is why it's great to hear from you that at least you feel comfortable doing what you do and believing in that. Right now for me, I'm struggling with doing what I believe in versus paying the bills.

I don't really worry about my art paying my bills. As soon as I started doing this stuff, I've never relied on this as an income. When I have an art show, I think if I get all my artwork back without somebody stealing it or ripping half of it off, I consider that good because I've dealt with a lot of bad experiences. I don't have much desire to be in the art community just for money. It's more personal reasons than art things.

It shows in your work and that's why it's so powerful. If you were doing it for any other reason other than for yourself, it probably would become too watered down.

A few pieces come along and they get sort of watered down. I haven't really done the extremities of art that I am capable of doing, just because there'd probably be no place to show it. It would be really nice to do it...but I don't think...

When you say extremities, what do you mean?

I mean I was doing a series on violence, and stuff on sex for a while. I would just think of these things to do that were extreme. I sometimes wonder, well do I even want to start going there? I definitely know some galleries would, but more or less they're not going to show it. That's what I'm saying...sometimes I water down my art, thinking that well...this will help me go here or go there, and it never does, and I'm coming to the realization that I'm just going to do what I want to do and not worry about it anymore.

I think the "Stop Bad Clown" is a great photo, and I was considering that for the cover, but like you said, it's almost too raw.

It's a good piece. "Stop Bad Clown" is a piece about television and the media and you see that shit everyday...and it's sort of candy coated and "oh we're conveying stuff just so you'll know about it," but they're raping the victims of crime as much as the criminals were to start with. That's really what that's all about.

You talked about television before...is that a general theme that you pursue? Other photographs seem very religious, is that also a theme that you tend to levitate towards?

Yeah. I rarely watch TV anymore. I grew up going to religious school, so I don't deal personally with religion anymore. Things are just so imbedded in me that they're there, and maybe this is just a way of releasing them.

For me it's a tendency to want to close all the doors and hole myself up and do the work...only communicate through my music or design, but also realizing that it's totally irrational to do so.

Yeah. I've done that for the past two years and it doesn't work. I thought well, something's going to happen. Like one day, it was just like day and night. I woke up and communicated with people and doing stuff...something may happen next year.

I understand you're moving to Orlando?

I'm going to be working between here and Orlando for sort of a full time basis. I'm starting a shoot with some people down there. Up here I mainly do my printing. I don't really shoot that much up here anymore. It's just the way things have taken me.

Have you always lived in Georgia?

Yeah, I grew up here.

It must be nice to get out of your home town.

I've never really been close to anybody here, or related to anybody here. I've pretty much lived in my own little world my whole life, so it doesn't make a difference to me. ㄖ

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ERIC CHAMBERLAIN
INDEX
INTERVIEW BY SANDMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY INDEX



DENSE LAYERS OF ATMOSPHERE, RAZOR-SHARP SEQUENCES AND BRAZEN PERCUSSION TRACKS ARE THE ELEMENTS THAT MAKE AN ELECTRO BAND GREAT—INDEX HAS A FULL ARSENAL OF ALL OF THESE WEAPONS. HOWEVER, IT IS THE ABILITY TO WEAVE EMOTIONALLY CAPTIVATING BACKGROUNDS WHICH CAN CREATE A SENSE OF DESPAIR OR PROVIDE A LINING OF HOPE TO LIFT US ABOVE THE CHAOS WHICH SETS INDEX APART. THIS ASTOUNDING COLLAGE OF TEXTURES TELLS A STORY ALL ITS OWN. BUT ON AN EARLY SUMMER'S EVE FROM ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, ERIC CHAMBERLAIN GAVE US THAT STORY IN HIS WORDS, SPEAKING OF PAST HARDSHIPS AND LOOKING FORWARD TOWARD A NEW BEGINNING.

Index songs have always had a dark chaotic feel on the surface, but there often tends to be a lining of hope in the background—what issues are you dealing with when you write?

Well, I do like for the music to be dense and full of various textures; that's where the chaos comes from. The hope comes from the melodies. I think my compositions are more melodic than a lot of other industrial music. The issues vary song to song. Recently I've been wrestling with organized religion.

On "The Dove" and "Render Godless" you employ imagery of God and the Afterlife. How does spirituality fit into your music as well as your life?

It's really hard for me because I was brought up as a Christian and I want to be fair about it. I don't just want to say, "Fuck God! Fuck Jesus!" I'm not into that. I am into questioning what's going on though. In our everyday lives we use logic and reason, but for the most important matter, our souls and what will happen when we die, we are forced to rely on some kind of blind faith, and I have a problem with that.

The cover of *Black Light Twilight* appears to be a decaying angel. We're you trying to make a religious statement?

My friend Tom did that painting for me; he's finishing up the cover for the next album as we speak. But about this one, I told him where I was going with some of the songs and he took off with it. If you notice, the entire image is shaped like a heart—that was unintentional. When I pointed that out to him, he accentuated it a bit. It was supposed to represent an angel who had been sitting in one place for eternity and all of the debris and leaves had settled upon it. I really like the images it conjures up.

This album seems more sinister than your previous work—do you agree? Did something happen in your life to trigger this?

"Departure" and "Iconoclast" certainly are. I wanted to try something darker like Megaptura or some of the other Cold Meat Industries bands. I wanted to utilize that dark ambient style. I didn't get more evil or anything. No particular occurrence set me off. Initially the label didn't really like the idea, but the album grows on people over time.

There are numerous bells and chimes as well as piano on this album, and the songs feel more natural and complete than your material from a couple of years ago. What were your intentions and goals for *Black Light Twilight*?

That's a good thing to notice—it was intentional. Combining lush sounds, piano and strings, with keyboard effects to make real music. It was important to use those classical types of sounds. I wanted to show that I could really compose and write a complex piece of music with peaks and valleys. "Wait for Me" is a good example. The goal was to show more variety and better production than on *Sky Laced Silver*. I wanted more control over the final output. I had more time with this album, I wasn't rushed as with the last album. Creativity and depth were the goals. Actually, I think it takes people a while to discover that.

Let's go back a bit. Tell us how you got started; what made you decide "I must make music"?

It was probably 1985 when I lived in the Philippines and was in middle school; that's when I heard electronic music for the first time. Kids in the US had already been introduced to the whole startup of New Wave and the electronic music coming out of Europe. For instance, bands like Depeche Mode, Gary Numan and Kraftwerk. However, being overseas I missed some of that. Before ever being introduced to Euro Wave, I heard some old rap records from the West Coast and they sounded brilliant back then. They had cool electronic backgrounds and just blew me away. I then knew I wanted to make electronic music.

That's interesting, because you give thanks to many other industrial and electro acts, but on each release you've ➤

mentioned Egyptian Lover; I remember Egyptian Lover as an early rap artist who featured smooth, dreamy electro sequences similar in style to the background patterns you used on say "Static Sky" and "Thorn."

It's so ironic, being that I make industrial music, but Egyptian Lover is one of the biggest musical influences in my life. Of course, it's quite cheesy to go back and listen to it now, but he was doing things I hadn't heard before—with all of the vocal effects, vocoders and synth rhythms.

What about Afrika Bambaata's "Planet Rock?"

Same thing. Actually, I still have all of those old 12" records in my closet now. Also, Soulsonic Force.

Not many industrial musicians are familiar with these acts.

Well, they were mostly influenced by the Europeans like Kraftwerk. But so were these raps artists, and that's what people don't realize.

How long have you been playing keyboards? Were you formally trained or self-taught?

I had to teach myself. After I heard all this electronic stuff I wanted to begin playing right away. I couldn't believe how expensive keyboards were, so the best I could do was a drum machine. It turned out great because the drum machine taught me the rudiments of sequencing, tempo, and song times. When I got my first keyboard I was ready.

Didn't Index start out as a 3-person project on the *Never this Infliction* EP? What lead to the demise of that collaboration?

Yes, there was myself, Kurt Luetze and Cody Cast. Everything started off on the right foot and we got along, but after about a year conflicts began to arise. Curt was really into the music, but we weren't getting along, he was too into the image, how he looked and how evil he was. It just wasn't working out, I felt stupid being around him. He just hated everyone and everything; his attitude really bothered me. He quit before we kicked him out. About a year ago Cody and I parted ways because he just wasn't contributing enough. He really wanted to be a part of it but he was treating it like a hobby and I was quite serious. He was still worried about girls and cars. It was holding back the music.

How have the lineup shifts affected your work? Do you find it easier to realize your vision without competing viewpoints?

Oh yes! Definitely. I really like my current working environment. Of course if you enjoy collaborating with someone, that can be a great experience, because they may have very original ideas. Right now though it's so low stress, and I don't have to worry about someone else's schedule—I can work as fast or slow as I want.

Describe your equipment setup.

I've got a 16 channel Mackie mixer, which is great because it's so quiet. I sequence everything on my expanded ASR 10 sampler. There's an old Jupiter 6 analog board, a wicked Klavia Nord Lead, and a hard disk recorder I just recently got. Maybe a couple other things. It's a pretty small setup really. When we were a 3-man band, we learned the hard way that you don't need to spend a lot of money. We wasted money renting studio time when we could've bought our own gear. Now I can do whatever I want at home.

One school of thought in industrial/goth suggests that one must fully explore the horror and frustration of life in order to find truth or hope. Do you subscribe to this viewpoint?

No, I don't. It's more important just to be creative than to try to be a certain way...dark or whatever. Industrial music means that you are industrious in using your ideas and surroundings to make music. It doesn't imply a certain attitude or that you approach things negatively.

Do you find making music to be a cleansing or cathartic experience?

It helps me out and I love doing it; creating is a totally pleasant experience to me. I know it's a cliché, but it really does ease my pain.

Do you have any plans to tour or perform live? Obviously there are difficulties involved for a 1-man project.

I want to get a couple people together and play a couple shows in the US. After polishing the act a bit, I'd like to play in Europe, which the label really wants me to do. Not that people in the US don't deserve a polished show. It's just that the Belgians and Germans have seen it all, and seen all of the best when it comes to industrial.

Who is the single-most influential artist on your music career?

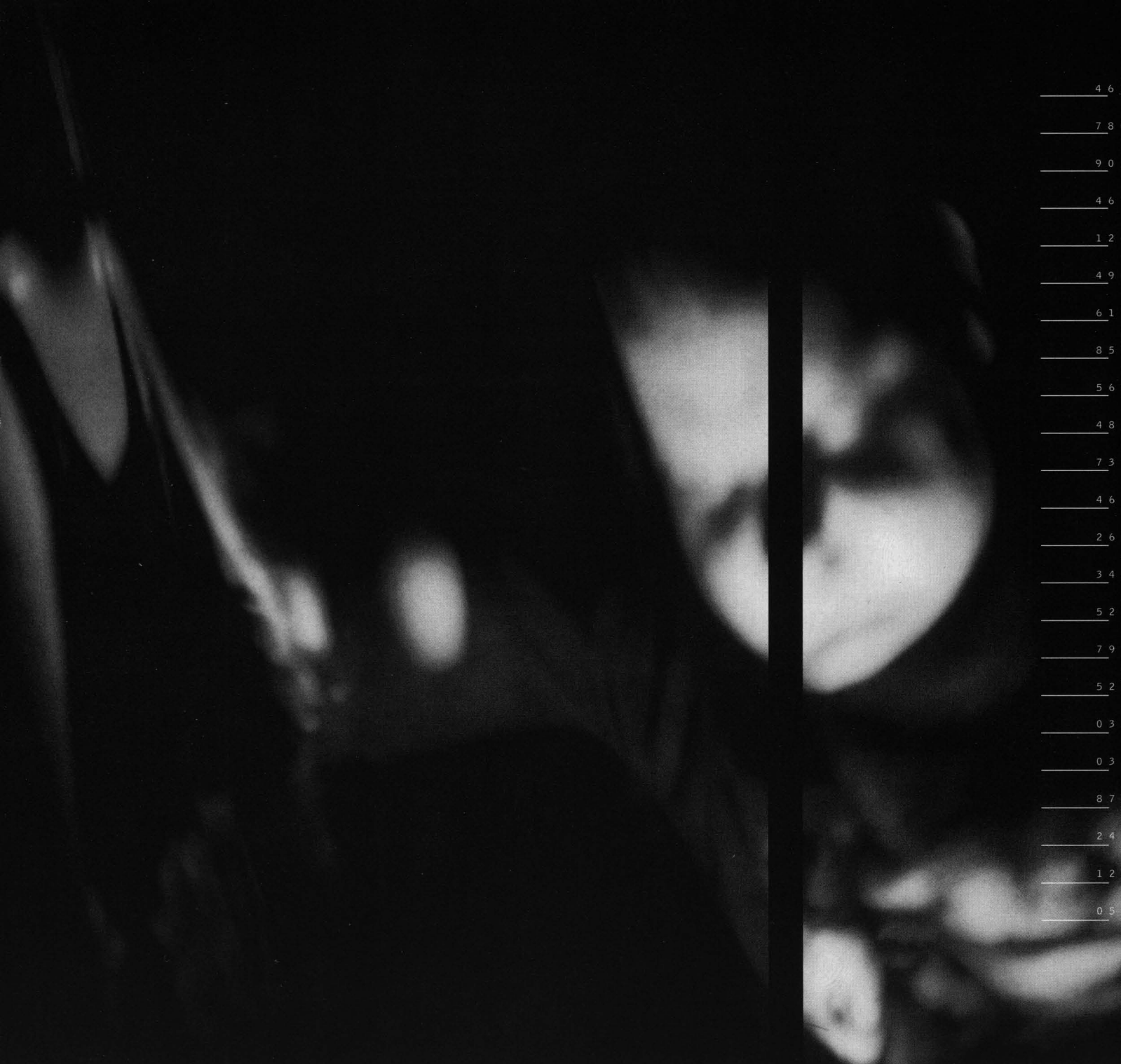
Front Line Assembly for sure. *Caustic Grip* era and even the really old stuff. I really like Front 242, but FLA is just something more. They really moved me, but got too involved with metal recently. I think the break-up may help them.

What other current artists do you most respect?

It's hard to say, I listen to so much more than I used to. I like keeping up with various styles; I'm listening to a lot of weird techno these days. Not the repetitive stuff, but creative sounds, like Autechre and Future Sound of London.

Tell us about your side project Ne Plus Ultra. That's from the "Cinder Cinder Girl" lyrics right? What does it mean?

Yes. I found it in the dictionary—it means "no more beyond." It's a little conceited. I took it to imply the highest degree of quality. COP really liked it. You need some attitude to make an impression. Generally, I keep things under tight wraps; I'm humble and shy that way. Ne Plus Ultra is slightly more techno yet hard to describe. Right now it's on hold in order to complete the new Index which will be out in a couple months. Ne Plus Ultra should come out in January 1998. It'll be more instrumental. Imagine Download, Juno Reactor and Vangelis swirled together. Like a modernized version of the *Blade Runner* soundtrack.



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Where do you feel your music will be going in the future?

The next album is called *Faith in Motion* and is dancier. I performed some deep analysis on Christianity and Nazism trying to dig into those topics. After that Index will leave religion and politics behind. I want the album to be very advanced and conceptual. It should stand apart. It's more important now than ever to be original.

What is the industrial scene like in New Mexico? Is there one?

Not really. Just a rehash of really old stuff. The clubs don't play the newer stuff and the record stores don't carry it.

There's a rumor that you may be considering relocating. Any truth to that?

It's been tumbling around in my head, I really don't like it here. I was forced here so to speak—home of the first atomic bomb. Per capita crime is higher here than L.A. There's a big gang element, but not much in the way of culture.

Putting the opinions of the world aside, how would you personally describe Index?

Index is art. It's not about making dance singles or radio songs, and the goal is not to slam everything. Index is about creating sound using a wide range of elements. Index started over with *Black light Twilight*—it was a new beginning. This is closer to my true vision than the previous work. People can expect more creativity and introspection in the future. X

INDEX RELEASES AVAILABLE ON COP INTERNATIONAL INCLUDE: *NEVER THIS INFLICTION*, *SKY LACED SILVER*, *BLACK LIGHT TWILIGHT*, AND *FAITH IN MOTION*.



RAYCE IAV

Mike:

Lycia has a very distinctive sound. How did you come up with that?

It's funny because in the pre-Lycia days I played guitar in different bands. I played through old foot pedals, and I came up with a sound trying to emulate the mid-eighties moody music like Cocteau Twins or Gene Loves Jezebel—that really distorted yet chorus delayed sound. Then I moved up to having digital rack effects. I spent a five year period trying to re-create the pedal sound on this expensive digital equipment...which eventually evolved into a Lycia sound.

Are you currently working on new songs?

Yeah. I have good feelings about the new material. I'm very critical, and I have yet to release an album that I am really truly content with. I think the newer material is getting closer.

What direction is the new material heading?

Oh man...this is funny because it depends on what week you talk to me. I change my mind all the time. I was going to do a new Bleak album[Lycia side project with one release entitled *Vane*], then I wasn't going to work on one. Then I was going to work on something else. I don't really know how much I want to expand with all these side projects. I'm thinking of bringing back all the ideas from all the different side projects and re-incorporating them into Lycia, and have the variation within Lycia.

I've heard the song from your side project Dust on the *Alleviation* compilation. How did that come about?

I had worked with John Fair, who played with Lycia during the *Wake* period in the early 80's. We started hanging out together during the time I was working on *Vane* and then *The Burning Circle*. We started talking about how fun it was when we worked together. He has a really strong drum programming and bass playing style, and we just decided to write some songs together. We recorded 60 minutes worth of music, and when we finished it, we went back and listened to it...and probably 30 minutes of it sounded weak and 30 minutes sounded strong. It sounded rushed, so I just kept the 30 minutes of the stronger material and partitioned it out to a bunch of compilations including *Alleviation*.

What about the Joy Division cover on the *Mere Mortal* tribute compilation...were they an influence for you?

Doing that song was really fun for me. If you listen to "In a Lonely Place" it's actually on the first New Order single, but it says written by Joy Division. It has this sound...I think you could see a comparison to some of Lycia's stuff...the slow tempo, the big guitar interplay. Back in the early 80's I remember when I first heard that song...I thought to myself, if I could ever write a

song like that I'd be pretty happy.

When I listened to your latest release *Cold*, it reminded me of your earlier work on *Ionia*, as opposed to *The Burning Circle* and *Then Dust*.

A lot of "old school" Lycia fans gave me hell for *The Burning Circle*. People really misunderstood that because they thought it was a direction change for me. I was getting ready to move on to continue doing electronic music, but I wanted to go back and re-visit my guitar roots briefly. I played in five or six different bands prior to Lycia starting in 1981. All those bands were guitar based, post-punk, mood orientated bands. It was really frustrating to me that I had nothing to document my early music career. So *The Burning Circle* is that re-visiting of my past. With *Cold* I really wanted to re-connect with what Lycia was all about.

There also seems to be a relationship between *Cold* and *Ionia* with the cover design and the cold theme versus the desert theme.

First of all, Sam came up with the idea of doing the cover *Ionia*-ish. I think the observation of the desert quality of *Ionia* is true. *A Day in the Stark Corner* is a desert album too, whereas *The Burning Circle* and *Vane* really weren't desert albums. After moving to Ohio. I wanted to have an album that reflected the new environment...my new perceptions of how I reacted to winter.

When did you move to Ohio?

During the break in the *Burning Circle* tour. After we did the California show and the Arizona show, we took a couple months off and then re-located here...and then continued on with the tour in the Midwest and East Coast.

Why the move?

It was a lot of reasons. One being that Tara was from around here. I knew the live opportunities were much more available on the East Coast...cities being closer. I just wanted a change too.

How long did you live in Arizona?

I moved there from Michigan when I was in High School in 1978 and lived there up until two years ago. So Arizona in my mind is still my home. I loved Arizona from the time we got there. I miss it a lot. I miss the West in general, but there's a lot that appeals about the Midwest and the East. Spring is a really interesting season here after going through a cold winter. It's warm and everything's blossoming...clouds coming off Lake Eerie. It's beautiful too. It's just different. We live out in the country. I'm looking out the back window right now and there's a big massive field and a forest which is all really bare looking because ➤

MIKE VANPORTFLEET • TARA VANFLOWER
LYCIA
INTERVIEW BY OCTAVIA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONDALAYA

THE LUSH MUSIC OF LYCIA IS BOTH CALMING AND OVERWHELMING. YOUR MIND WILL DRIFT AND BE SWALLOWED UP INTO THE MELANCHOLIC MOODS CREATED BY DRONING KEYBOARDS, DREAMY GUITARS, SAD MELODIES, AND DARK VOCALS. THEIR LATEST RELEASE, *COLD*, RE-EXPLORES THE INNER HEART OF LYCIA AND REFLECTS THE GROWING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MIKE AND TARA.

there's no leaves on the trees. We're sort of outdoorsy people. We like to go out and explore cemeteries or go out and hike.

Do you plan on staying there for a while?

It would be cool to move back to Arizona, but I don't particularly care where I live...just as long as we have a comfortable home, and are able to travel. Your home is going to be the same no matter where it is. It's just a bunch of walls and your belongings. As long as you have the freedom to travel. That's the main thing for me.

Were you inspired by the painting "American Gothic" for the photo that Projekt uses for your press releases?

That was just an accident. We had just finished the *Burning Circle* tour. At the time we hadn't had a chance to get our own place, so we were staying with Tara's parents, and across the street from her parents'

house there's this little cemetery. So we went over there with a friend of a friend of a friend and just started snapping pictures because we needed pictures for some magazine articles. We decided to go back to Tara's parents house to get some props and there was this pitchfork and we were thinking, oh it's like that picture "American Gothic" and thought it was sort of humorous. The picture was an accident in itself in that the girl was like, "The light meter on my camera's not working, I'll snap a few pictures anyway" and it over-exposed the picture and it ended up looking like an old picture. It turned out pretty interesting.

When did you and Tara meet?

I think it was shortly after *A Day in the Stark Corner* was recorded. She started sending me tapes of her band. I liked her voice. I tried talking her into coming out to Arizona to sing, and finally she came out and sang on two *Burning Circle* songs, and then we just sort of ended up hanging out together...and now we're married.

The addition of her vocals adds a lighter dimension that works well.

I'm glad she's singing. It's something I wanted to do from almost the beginning of Lycia, when me and John Fair were doing Lycia in the early days. We always were on the lookout for a female vocalist. We felt that it would be a good addition to the band...we just never could find anyone appropriate.

What's your song writing process like?

I just try to let it flow out however it comes out. I never sit down and write a song about a subject. Usually, I just start with the music, and it just sort of comes out of some sort of brainstorming or jamming. It depends on which period of time you're talking about. Like *Burning Circle* disc one, all those songs were initiated on the acoustic guitar. The songs for *Ionia* were pretty much initiated from rhythms and synth parts. The same is true for *A Day in the Stark Corner*. Those albums were built from the drums up. *Cold* was built around synth parts I wrote first. I tend to stick with the same formula for each individual album, so there's a uniformity to it. There's no intention to my writing. I'm not trying to push any agenda or politics. I'm just doing...just creating.

How do the lyrics fit in?

I have a really simple formula and that is—I just randomly spew out things off the top of my head. If it phonetically fits, I keep it. In a subconscious way, I'm probably more honest than I should be. What I'm feeling is pretty much reflected in the music. I just sit down and quickly write things as it comes out. And then six months down the line, I say, "What the hell was I saying that for? Man...Everyone knows what I was going through then."



Tara:

Do you write any of the lyrics?

I've written all the lyrics that I've sung so far. Basically, all my stuff is poetry. I don't really sit down and write lyrics. Like he said...I just write whatever comes out. A lot of times it doesn't seem to work, because Lycia is so mathematical. So I have to re-arrange things so that they fit rhythmically. I'm more of a writer than I am anything else.

You sing well too. When did you realize that you wanted to do music?

I guess when I was about 19, I started really getting into music, and I thought that would be something I would want to do. I met a couple of guys that were musicians, and we decided that we were going to work together. We didn't really do anything...just record a few songs. It was pretty much short-lived because we got into a big scuffle.

How did you find out about Lycia?

A friend from Tennessee sent me a copy of *Ionia*, and it was weird...as soon as the music came in it just struck me. So I wrote to Sam and got Mike's address...and that's basically how I got in touch with him.

So you just started writing and met and decided...

...decided we'd get married. It's one of those weird things that doesn't happen all the time. The only thing I have a problem with is I don't want people thinking like Oh, I'm his girlfriend so I got in the band.

How did the two songs you sang on *The Burning Circle* come about?

Those initially weren't even going to be on that album. They were just going to be extra songs to put on compilations or something. And then they decided they were going to do a double CD, and they added those songs on there. I'm hoping to sing a little bit more in the future. If not with Lycia, then a solo project or something like that.

Do you like performing live with Lycia?

I do, but getting over the nervousness of it...is sort of a problem for me. That's why I don't really like to sing live, because I don't feel I can give 100% because the nerves are still taking over. So I'll be looking forward to playing all these shows and getting over the last bit of nervousness.

How do you feel about your involvement in Lycia?

I've got a lot of stuff I want to do, and I don't seem to have the time to do it. But other than that, I'm really happy with it. It's a good outlet for emotions. I think what we're doing is true to what we are, and that's the only thing you can really hope for. X

LYCIA HAS SIX FULL LENGTH RELEASES ALL AVAILABLE ON
PROJECT: COLD, *THE BURNING CIRCLE* AND *THEN DUST*,
LIVE, *A DAY IN THE STARK CORNER*, *IONIA*, AND *WAKE*.



ERIC MUSS-BARNES

**THE GOTHIC RAINBOW:
BEGINNING VOLUME OF THE VAMPIRE NOCTUARIES**

INTERVIEW BY OCTAVIA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHRYN M. BARNES OF VISUAL ECHOES

The sheer number of music and literary references in *The Gothic Rainbow* is astounding.

It was done to reflect all the different elements of the story I wanted to. Obviously, if I'm going to write a book that's involved in the club scene I have to make musical references. Another reason why I put so much music in there is because this is something that I enjoy, and maybe other people would appreciate it too. As for literary references, a lot of that stemmed from my desire to put in faery myths. I'm really interested in Celtic folklore, and a lot of people that I know who are into the club scene are also into that, and yet, I've never seen a story that combined the two. So I thought that would be the perfect combination to create for a vampire book.

What was the biggest challenge in completing your novel?

Organizing the story was one of the more difficult things. I've never been the sort of person who's had writers block or a difficult time coming up with ideas. It's exactly the opposite. I have too many ideas, and I don't know which ones to include and which ones to throw out.

How did you begin writing it? Did you write different parts at different times?

Actually, I wrote the entire thing in sequence. I had the entire book outlined, and that's how I knew I was going to end up writing a sequel. As I was going through the whole novel I realized the length of the story wouldn't fit. So I had to pick a point where I could stop it and break it up into two pieces.

There are so many different styles of writing within the novel, ranging from poetic descriptions to idle conversation to total action...was that difficult?

I did it that way for two reasons. Number one: I just wanted to experiment...see what different types of styles I could write. And the second reason: I've never written a novel before, so I had nothing to draw from. It was a good way to break up the monotony. I would be writing a chapter, and by the time I'd be getting to the end of the chapter I'd be bored with it. I would look forward to the next chapter knowing that I was going to write it in a very different sort of way. I would never know exactly what I was going to do, but it did break up the tedium of writing in any one sort of style.

In the epilogue you were very honest about yourself. Why did you feel you needed to be so open?

I wrote the epilogue...to explain myself without having to do it over and over again. As for being very blunt...that's just the way I try to be, it's the way everybody should be, but I have to admit that a lot of times I'm not. A lot of times I don't say what's on my mind. Maybe I wrote it as a reminder to myself. I've always liked the philosophy of questioning everything. It doesn't mean that you should throw any ideals away or any of your own personal morals, it just means that you should always question them. X

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO PURCHASE *THE GOTHIC RAINBOW* CONTACT
DUBH SITH INK

6200 BIDDULPH RD. BOX 44046, BROOKLYN, OH 44144

dubhsith@aol.com

members.aol.com/dubhsith

OR SEE PAGE 5 TO ORDER DIRECTLY FROM OUTBURN



THE GOTHIC RAINBOW
BEGINNING VOLUME OF THE VAMPIRE NOCTUARIES
ERIC MUSS-BARNES

Sometimes, I think I'll never get out of this fucking house. Like when I turn 18, they'll still keep me here somehow. Or else Fate will keep me here. With my luck, every college and apartment in the country will burn down the day before my 18th birthday. Wouldn't surprise me one bit.

Sandra is supposed to sneak me out to Aege Merwin tonight. But, I'm not in a clubbing mood. I hardly feel like going anymore. It seems the millionth, lazy, slothful weekend in a row. The endurance of time. What more do I do?

...Recalling times long gone. Misty memories that flutter in the peripheral vision of my mind like butterflies. Fictional memories...of elegance...Of Love.

...Dreary. Oh, how dreamily. "I think I'm old and I'm feeling pain. And it's so cold, like the cold if you were dead."...And this lass is...for all intensive purposes. I am. Dead. Ashes...Oh, to be a phoenix. Only that...to be...

Does the pain stop if you cry?...Does it stop if you hate?...And if you feel nothing, why wake up at all?

...I do not like what I've become. I do not like my inability to do that which I most need to do: trust and love.

I trust no one. Love terrifies me.

...Ha...How silly of me! Oh, sap. To think him to be...to consider it. Vanity. Futility. I have learned. He is not the one. He will kill me, like so many others.

No one has ever cared. No one shall ever. Look very closely. See the signs. Some things never change. Did I expect things to with him? Oh, why? Naivete. Oh, foolishness. No one will ever change to love me. I am at fault. I am nothing. I am unloveable. Otherwise, he would not have hesitated. No one has ever needed time to accept me - only to reject me.

Foolishness. What a fall to set up for! ...Wanting. Hoping. Expecting...oh, even beginning to believe! I should have learned. As I have...

No one who loves you will ever hide their love...No one has ever loved me. No one shall. Ever. I am nothing. Unloveable.

Flesh tears. The heart screams. Fangs pierce.
My flesh penetrates...Skin so tender. A
moan escapes. Falling softly. Riding the night air
like softly broken glass. Riding the flesh of the
beasts. Fangs of hounds. Wild the Hunt.
She shivers. With no protection from the cold.
The sword of a dead king plunges into a
fathomless lake.

Blood flows.

The black widow cries out. One with -
- things laugh on...

Tears of blood. Widow in eagle's claw. Brittany
pipers and dirges old. The laugh of deep
resounding horns. Beastly horns piercing flesh.
Like fangs.

Falling.

Crashing.

So soon returns the day.



The Gothic Rainbow

Dismounting My bike in the conservatory, by
the fountain, I walk through to the sun-
porch patio. With flickering, old-movie light.
Yellowed funny, no happy smile. Just inside sits a
young, summerdressed child, softly making a
grand piano giggle among the childrens books
...Bells...Of wind-up toys and blind popsicle eyes.

Upon the patio balcony I walk. There, a beauti-
ful girl is sitting at an ebony, iron breakfast table.
The table covered in the purest, white lace table-
cloth. Gossamer fine. A perfect match for the girls
ivory, filigree unitard. Perfumed honeysuckle.
Clear, acrylic combat boots protect crossed feet.
Her jacket is motorcycle-black with a Black Tape
For A Blue Girl logo adorning the back and left
sleeve. Silver serpent earrings slither with high-
lights of her long, black hair.

Eyes the purple of Arizona sunsets.

"Hello." Surprisingly, she smiles up from a book
which is keeping her quite enthralled. A misty
English accent spicing her voice.

"Hello."

"Sometimes I forget..."

My brow puzzles "...Forget what?"

"This time You'll remember."

THE GOTHIC RAINBOW, THE FIRST OF TWO NOVELS, CHRONICLES THE ADVENTURES OF NIGHT CRAWLING VAMPIRES WHO PROWL THE GOTHIC-INDUSTRIAL CLUBS AND WRECK HAVOC UPON THE LIVES OF MERE MORTALS. BUT IT ALSO EXPLORES THE EMOTIONS OF REAL PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE THE JOYS AND SORROWS OF LIFE. *THE GOTHIC RAINBOW* GIVES SOLACE AND ESCAPE FOR THOSE WHO FEEL TRAPPED IN A MESSED-UP WORLD FULL OF HEARTACHES AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS. THERE IS PLENTY OF SEX AND VIOLENCE TO STIMULATE, BUT IT'S THE DELICATE BEAUTY AND PASSIONATE WRITING OF THIS NOVEL THAT WILL TOUCH YOUR SOUL.





DAS ICH



DAS ICH w/INERTIA @ The Trocadero, San Francisco CA 5/18/97

Inertia hit the stage with the best of high energy intentions, but came off looking like a slightly less metal-edged Cubanate. It was nothing special and the histrionics of the vocalist grew tiresome quickly, as evidenced by the crowd's lack of enthusiasm. The pendulum swung fully the other direction as Das Ich took the stage in striking fashion when Stefan, covered only in a studded loincloth and ash-tone body paint, stalked to the edge of the stage and carefully studied his audience like an alien examining his newfound surroundings. Stefan is by far the most arresting frontman in any genre. His hard German facial features and starved frame were merely the instrument for his provocative gestures and dance. This remarkable physical presence was surpassed by his impassioned, introspective vocals, sung only in German. There was a primitive yet intellectual, psychological air to the performance which obscured the fact that all of the music was electronic, save for the live cymbals on the drum kit. Bruno Kramm orchestrated the music in a tempestuous marriage of chaos and beauty with the help of Ingo Beitz of Kalte Farben on keys and a live drummer. A rare and wonderful performance to say the least. - Sandman [The two Long Beach clubs, Das Bunker and Vampiricus, joined forces to bring the show to Southern California. Das Ich's performance was just as impressive with the added bonus of William Faith of Faith and the Muse accompanying Stefan on vocals for a few songs.]

CRANES w/RASPUTINA @ The Roxy, Hollywood CA 4/8/97

Who wouldn't be enthralled by the three beautiful ladies of Rasputina as they took the stage with their exquisite hair and adorned in Elizabethan corsets, pantaloons, lace, and cotton slips all masterfully playing the cello? The eclectic trio of Melora, Julia, and Agnieszka held the audience captive with their intricate and modern cello compositions. Accompanying them was a dreadlocked drummer who brought thundering beats to the energetic performance. Between the songs Melora interjected with odd tales of bizarre quotes from the paranoid Howard Hughes as well as other frantic stories to set the scene for their songs. Rasputina's overwhelming presence and inspiring talent is well worth seeing live. The Cranes? Well, let's just say Rasputina blew them out of the water. - Octavia

SWITCHBLADE SYMPHONY and SUNSHINE BLIND w/WENCH @ The Trocadero, San Francisco CA 5/3/97

Female electro Goth duo Wench started the night in front of the hometown crowd with a smooth, minimal presentation. They had little stage space to work with, and I was unfamiliar with them before this show. Hey, opening-opening band is tough to pull off anytime. This was my first time seeing Sunshine Blind since the addition of their new drummer Geoff. Their act was even more powerful than on previous tours. Caroline's vocals were lovely yet street-hardened as always and melded well with CWHK's searing guitar work. JT hammered out the throbbing basslines which entwined with the beat and drove the rhythm home. My only complaint is that the vocals and guitar were too low in the mix on several of the songs. Their cover of Flock of Seagulls "I Ran" was light-hearted and fun. Switchblade Symphony have gotten better with experience. Tina has developed into an impressive stage presence and the band as a whole mesh well. This is quite a feat considering they switched guitarists not so long ago. The keyboards and curtains of guitar sounds blended into a cohesive and texturally satisfying mix of power and beauty. The unforgettable "Chain" is always a highlight. - Sandman

THE PROPHETESS and THE SHROUD w/WRECKAGE @ The Alligator Lounge, Santa Monica CA 5/25/97

It was refreshing to go to a show close to my home, but because The Alligator Lounge is not known for its gothic shows on Sunday nights, the crowd was rather minimal. However, the performances were anything but disappointing. First up was Tony Lestat's Wreckage turning in an effective gothic-industrial set of new material which will hopefully be released soon. Tony's voice was incredible—smooth and strong, with the programmed drums and sequences mixed just right with the live bass and guitar. Next up were The Shroud, who are also finishing material for a new release. Lydia's radiant voice and scintillating stage presence exemplify the beauty and grace of the gothic ideal. It was delightful to hear the classic "Ophelia" as well as several songs from their CD *Long Ago and Far Away*. Their brand new songs sounded great and should translate into an outstanding album. Headlining the show were the men of The Prophetess, who have grown up with a more mature stage presence and an excellent live sound that they've perfected over the last few years. The performance of the songs off their latest release *Dichotomy* was stunning as usual. In June, The Prophetess went on their first big tour across the East Coast with The Last Dance. - Octavia

BATTERY w/THE RAZOR SKYLINE @ Maritime Hall, San Francisco CA 3/8/97

The Razor Skyline introduced San Francisco to their punchy punk Goth sound by churning out a potent 40 minute set. Vocalist Karen Kardell swung from dark beautiful Gothic strains to strong and brutal rock powerhouse vocals; a tough feat to pull off so effectively. Guitarist Robin Jacobs, formerly of Switchblade Symphony, was excellent, combining force and beauty to present a wide spectrum of sounds. Corey and LoEjekta switched frequently between keys and electro drum kit. At times The Razor Skyline incorporate synth pop sequences into their style, making for an interesting blend. After a short break, Bay Area favorites Battery took the excitement to an even higher level with their special brand of synthcore. The trio rotate among two drum kits and one keyboard rig. Each of the three sang lead vocals, banged the pads, and played synth at some point in the evening, displaying their versatility and passion at every turn. However, Maria is definitely the driving force. The band backed her spirited lead with industrial strength beats and catchy hooks that toughened up at just the right times. Battery showed the grit and conviction that have made them a crowd favorite and a flagship band on COP International. - Sandman

POLLY MOLLER @ Lumpy Gravy, Hollywood CA 4/12/97

Lumpy Gravy is the hippest place in LA to eat Hungarian food, browse through a splendid collection of music, art, books, and magazines for sale, as well as hear electronic bands and noted DJs perform. Polly Moller accompanied by the Oblivious Scientist on bass, took the small stage set in front of the street window just as most of the patrons were finishing dinner. The music of Polly is unusual, innovative, and strangely beautiful—like an alien landscape. Classically trained, she leaves tradition behind to explore the more alternative sounds of the flute and bass flute. During this live performance, Polly Moller produced eclectic atmospheres which combined experimental sounds with vocal pitch shifting, looped electronics, and bass. Her performance was quite enjoyable. Polly Moller has also produced a music video show called Women's Alternative which was on Mountain View cable and is still on Santa Cruz cable. - Octavia

SUNSHINE BLIND



THE PROPHETESS



THE RAZOR SKYLINE



POLLY MOLLER



SPAHN RANCH



LOVE SPIRALS
DOWNWARDS

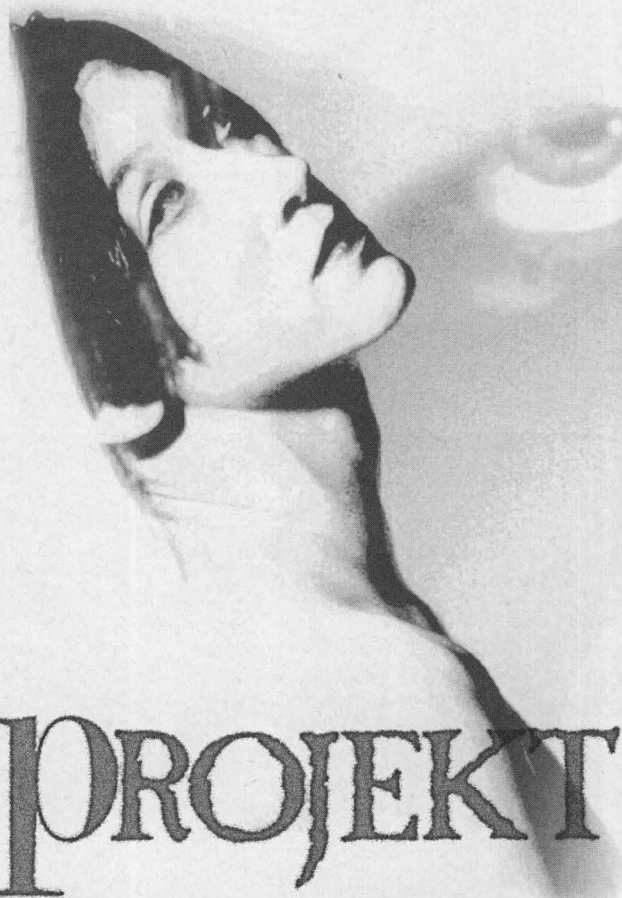


LOVE SPIRALS DOWNWARDS w/CLAIRE VOYANT @ Dizzy Debbie, Hollywood CA 4/25/97
At first Dizzy Debbie, which appeared to be a Chinese restaurant by day, seemed to be an odd location for a night of ethereal splendor. But when Love Spirals Downwards took the small stage for a rare live appearance, they explained that they live in the apartments just behind the venue. They gave a splendid performance to a packed house that showcased the remarkable voice of Suzanne Perry and the acoustic guitar strumming of Ryan Lum. The pair joked with their friends in the audience in-between songs, which added to the relaxed and light hearted atmosphere. Most of the crowd sat on the floor quietly absorbing the simplistic beauty of their performance. Claire Voyant, who opened the show, were surprisingly impressive with beautiful vocals accompanied by soft guitar and keyboard compositions. - *Octavia*

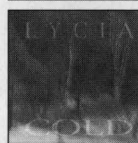
XORCIST w/LUXT @ Roderick's Chamber, San Francisco CA 5/13/97
Sacramento's Luxt came to town to peddle their wares and play a little metal. A gaggle of musicians (or is that geese?) took the stage, but failed to produce a single interesting note. The singer/guitarist guy was particularly tedious. I was impressed by the female member who cycled between keys, beats, and a mean southpaw bass. Otherwise, all yawns. Xorcist did much more with far less. Peter Stone (Bat), the one-man dark electro assault, stormed the stage looking like the Grim Reaper himself. His girlfriend, a dead ringer for one of the cenobites from the film *Hellraiser*, provided a nice stage balance and additional energy. The artists were accompanied by a video screen splattered with disturbing images from movies, video games, news clips, and computer-generated artwork. It may be standard fare for the industrial crowd, but this is an electro band doing the most it can with limited financial and personnel resources; a lot of work went into producing a quality show. And you could dance to it too. - *Sandman*

SPAHN RANCH w/ELEMENT @ Das Bunker, Long Beach CA 4/18/97
Spahn Ranch needed no introduction as these Cleopatra veterans gave a surprisingly active live performance for an all electronic band, playing just about all their single worthy cuts. With two drummers, the sweat was pouring and the club was filled with energy. Matt Green handled the electronics while Athan gave a nicotine high vocal performance with plenty of charisma to go along with his lovely voice. Opening for the show was Element who played a short but sweet set of dark electronic songs that would have sounded better with proper adjustments to the sound system. The DJs at Das Bunker spin some great new electro industrial sounds, so if you're in the area it's worth checking out. - *Octavia*

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Love Spirals Downwards



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REVIEWS

VARIOUS ARTISTS — *Diva X Machina* (COP International)

If you think the industrial scene is stagnating and needs to have new life breathed into it, listen to *Diva X Machina*! This compilation is nothing short of brilliant, proving that the ladies really are doing it for themselves, and doing it quite well. **The Razor Skyline** start the album off with the grinding "Queen of Heaven." **Sunshine Blind** use "Regodless" to show off their thunderous brand of goth. The sparse electro of "Repress" displays the power and originality we've grown to expect from **Battery**. **Collide's** "Beneath the Skin" is both beautiful and haunting as is the marvelous "I Am" by **Attrition**. Anyone familiar with the bands mentioned above knows to expect excellence. However, several of the lesser known names on *Diva X Machina* jumped up and bit me. **Fading Colours** is refreshing, coupling smooth electro with the even smoother, crystal clear vocals of De Coy. De Coy reminds me of a cross between Jimmy Somerville (Bronski Beat/Communards) and Liz Frasier (Cocteau Twins)—stunning. **Randolph's Grin** with their well-arranged piece featuring passionate, and at times angry, female vox appears to be an unsigned band from Michigan; they deserve to be signed immediately. All of the songs on the compilation are very good. Kim X, the driving force behind COP and one of the more potent women of industrial in her own right, has put together an album which is both wonderful and necessary. *Diva X Machina* will inject vibrancy and freshness directly into the veins of any collection which has grown somewhat stale. — *Sandman*



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MORPHINE ANGEL — Lovenest+Murderfest (Delinquent)

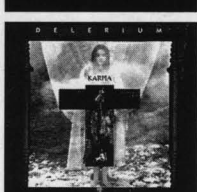
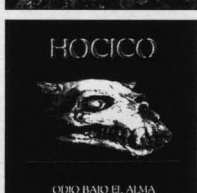
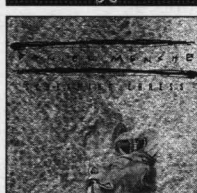
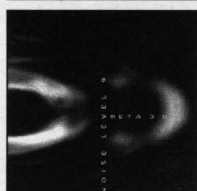
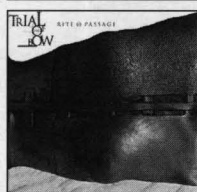
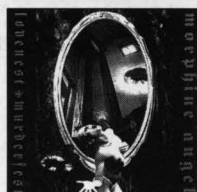
Back with their follow-up to their highly praised debut, *Project Isa*, is Lincoln, Nebraska's Morphine Angel. This latest offering is an angst filled gothnest+metalfest fittingly titled *Lovenest+Murderfest*. Morphine Angel combine metal guitar riffs, classic gothic bass lines, industrial-like programming, and desperate vocals filled with melancholic glum to produce a bastard of a musical monster. Don't let the name Morphine Angel mislead you. Some of these tracks have breakneck BPMs that will send standard goth black sheep to the slaughterhouse. The heaviest of these is "The Pit," which should catalyze any tepid pit at a show into a swirling, mashing mass of bodies. "The Pit" is a straight-on old school punk/ska tune with a modern industrial edge. Another track, "Day One," is classically goth with a sad, heavy bass line, reflective and insightful lyrics, and a sonic haze in the background that builds to a boil. All of the other tracks fall somewhere in-between these two, but all are more than listenable. This CD concludes with three live bonus tracks from the *Project Isa* disc and a great cover of 45 Grave's "Partytime." What else can I say except that as long as the barbed-wire black heart of Morphine Angel beats in America's heartland, I'll be there to listen. — *Shade*

TRIAL OF THE BOW — Rite of Passage (Release)

The music of this up and coming Australian duo lies in the fertile ground of a magical domain where reality is long forgotten. Trial Of the Bow's second work offers much more variety with regards to instruments and ethnic styles than the *Ornamentation* debut. Some of the instruments utilized include the Tibetan Singing Bowl, tamboura, the Oud, and hammered dulcimer to name a few. "The Court of the Servant" and "Alizee" tastefully explore thirteenth century medieval music, while cuts such as "Father of the Flower," "Serpent," and "Ceilidh for the Sallow Ground" are deeply immersed in a rich Middle Eastern aesthetic. With *Rite of Passage*, Renato Gallina and Matthew Skarajew have succeeded in stirring up those of insatiable imaginations with their melting pot of sounds. Highly recommended for lovers of *Dead Can Dance* and *O Yuki Conjugate*, though uniquely compelling in its own right. — *Adam M. Bialek*

SUB VERSION — The Winds of War (Mere Mortal)

Through the CD release of Sub Version's *The Winds of War*, John Koviak invites the listener into an exquisite world of dark romance. Slip this disc into a CD player and listen as Koviak's provocative vocals and electronic melodies ooze through the speakers. The release opens with "For You I Would Wait Forever," the first of several instrumental pieces—all of which could serve as the score for a beautiful gothic romance film. The following two tracks, "Will" and "Purity," have more of an industrial dance feel. "Hope," another dreamy instrumental piece, lures the listener deeper into the mind behind Sub Version. This track actually serves as a nice segue into the more delicate songs. Most notable amongst the tracks is "Ice Angel." The music is so sublime that it actually takes a while to realize that the lyrics drip with despair. The effect is such that I can imagine the actual Ice Angel melting into the music. — *Liz Obanesian*



NOISE LEVEL 9 — Beta 3.0

From the very first note, Noise Level 9 penetrates and pushes the power of programmed electronics, crunching guitars, and scathing vocals to new heights. This is an amazing CD full of sonic intensity and talent, clearly displayed on such songs as "Technological Bent" and "Love," that will rival and even surpass established acts on Metropolis, COP, etc. *Beta 3.0* is the third in the series of "demo" releases by Noise Level 9. Amongst the incredibly produced and written original songs is an insightful cover of the B-52's "Dance This Mess Around." Only five songs long, this is the best industrial release I've heard in a while. It's hard, fast, and textured. And it's completely done and independently released by one person, Ron Busslinger. Memorable and destined for greatness! — *rodent*

FEAR FACTORY — Remanufacture (Cloning Technology) (Roadrunner)

Remanufacture (Cloning Technology) successfully unites industrial, jungle, gabba, and ambient with the intense metal Fear Factory are known for. Thirteen tracks from their last release, *Demanufacture*, were remixed by Junkie XL, Kingsize, DJ Dano, and Rhys Fulber (who did the majority of the mixes). The result is a fun yet powerful release that surpasses all previous attempts at uniting electronics with metal. Fear Factory do more than make good music with *Remanufacture (Cloning Technology)*, they explore how technology, especially cloning, relates to individuality. Each track is, "designed for a specific function in the investigation of truth, and the struggle for a non-conformist world." While their goals seem a bit lofty, their search for truth at least provides something to think about. Although the constant intensity and depth of the songs makes it hard to sit through, *Remanufacture (Cloning Technology)* is an impressive collaboration that boldly goes where no band has gone before. — *Octavia*

DANIEL MENCHE — Screaming Caress (Side Effects)

Daniel Menche is back and he is tougher than ever. Known for his ambitious performances using pure items of nature like salt, sand, and muscle, this Portland based sound artist chooses to focus on the sonic environment of pure skin to further explore his testament to the purity of sonic language and its energy. *Screaming Caress* was created purely from somatic sounds fabricated through the use and abuse of the body, in particular the skin, larynx, chest, lungs, heart, and fist. Influenced heavily by the power of nature, gods, monsters, demons, angels, and energy, "Monster Menche" always creates a product of "brutal soul impact." With this new work, although much more minimal than past works, nothing is lost. It continues to exhibit his raw energy and power more than ever with less sonic infringement and more intelligent space and rashes of extreme urgency. Deep intense growling visceral environments of pleasure and pain...be careful; make sure you're ready for this one. — *texture*

STEVE ROACH AND VIDNA OBMANA — Cavern of Sirens (Projekt)

There is a duality of themes musically unfolding in each piece on *Cavern of Sirens*, with percussion and rhythmic drumming, and vocals and sounds meant to emulate animal cries and sounds of nature. At the closing of each piece, the sounds shift to a non-rhythmical collage of chords and tones. There is no discernible separation between tracks; however, the ebb and flow of sounds feels like changing seasons and cycles. As the music plays itself out, I get the sense that I'm being taken on an adventure that leads me into the core of my essence and existence, then outwards into the far reaches of the world and above it and even to the underworld. From the song titles, it is confirmed to me that Roach and Obmana are indeed, taking the listener on a journey of some kind, but it is up to the listener where that journey leads and what is discovered there. The intermingling of percussion, tribal drumming and chanting and new age-sounding ambiance, all add to the sense of journey and opening up to new discoveries and understandings. In short this CD seems to be best listened to for contemplative purposes, like meditation, or for enhancing the creative process and accessing the subconscious mind. It is deep and at times takes the listener inward, but it ends on a lighter level, fading away like an ocean flowing away from the shore. — *Singing Rain*

HOCICO — Odio Bajo El Alma (Opcion Sonica)

Mexico is now on the proverbial industrial map thanks to a pair of muchachos from Naucalpan who call themselves Hocico, (Spanish for muzzle). There has been a scene deep underground in Mexico for quite some time, but nothing I've heard has been this impressive. Hocico's, *Odio Bajo El Alma* (Soul Full of Hate) is just as good if not better than anything coming out of Europe or the US. Shedding their native tongue for most of the songs, their music makes itself accessible to a wider audience and could blend in well with the majority of industrial bands. The two tracks that are in Spanish add a nice twist to the usual EBM vocal sound we've all grown accustomed to. This album is all strong electro-dance-industrial and could prove to be very dancefloor friendly. Hocico will hopefully jump-start the Mexican scene and inspire many bands to follow. VIVA HOCICO! — *Shade*

DELERIUM — Karma (Netzwerk)

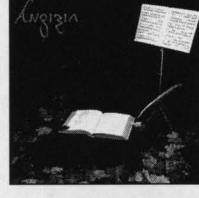
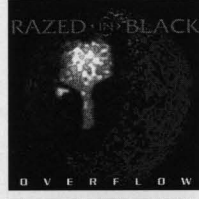
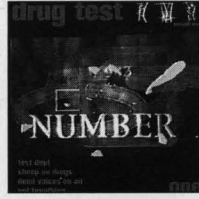
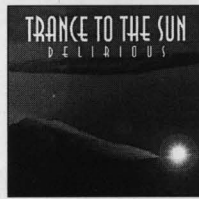
Delerium is the creative gem by the talented Bill Leeb and Rhys Fulber, who are also known for their work as *Noise Unit* and *Front Line Assembly*. *Karma*, the follow-up to *Semantic Spaces*, takes a leap into uncharted territory with eleven enchanting, tribal-tech atmospheres. The prominent strength of *Karma* is the soothing vocal and lyric contributions of four muses: *Kristy Thirsk*, *Camille Henderson*, *Sarah McLachlan*, and *Jacqui Hunt*. Their beautiful voices coordinate well with each other and with the music. Depth and familiarity is brought to the music with samples from *Dead Can Dance*, *Baka Forest Pygmies*, and *Ritual Music of the Kayapo-Xikrun*. Additional sounds used to created the lush and exotic atmospheres include church bells, choirs, gentle drums, and acoustic guitars. With lovely photos and the creative design of the disc inserts to round out the presentation, this artistic release will hold a fond place in many CD collections. *Karma* is an impressive combination of technological manipulation and human touch that will bring you a moody and complex energy. — *Octavia*

AMBER ASYLUM – *Frozen in Amber* (Elfenblut)
Frozen in Amber features nine compositions of well conceived post classical dirges using violin, cello, piano, guitar, and bewitching electronics. The debut from Amber Asylum is as equally beautiful as it is tragic...gentle, yet at times ominous. The dualities make this disc all the more memorable. Some very nice string arrangements have been designed, as well as experimental dissonant pieces like "Heckle and Jeckle" and "Journey to the Sleepy Water." The female vocals are often in the background under a veil of mystery, though "Aurora" brings such to the center stage. An interesting interpretation of Mozart's "Ave Maria" presents a piece with the grainy sound of an antique vinyl record. Perhaps the only regret is the brevity of many compositions. Some could use more time to sustain the mood. Hopefully, Amber Asylum will let their music branch out into a couple of extended overtures for their next release. – *Adam M. Bialek*

HEAVY WATER FACTORY – *Author Of Pain*
 (Energy)

The versatility of the tracks on *Author Of Pain* is inspiring, from the more aggressive industrial sound of "Place of Torment" or "Away," to the smoother melodic vocals in "Wake Up in Darkness" and "Better Than Dead," and yet further to the beautiful instrumental songs like "Revenge" and "The Individual." The ability to be striking with all of these styles is a good indication that future works from Heavy Water Factory will be even better. The subtlety of some of the instrumentals, and a lot of the whispered and hissing vocals, gives more power than if they did a lot of yelling and screaming. The two different singers help keep the vocals fresh as well. So many different emotions are touched throughout *Author Of Pain*, that it would be impossible for nothing on this album to grip someone. There is really only one obvious "hit," being "Place Of Torment," which is not because the others aren't as good—but that they don't make any songs arrogant enough to step forward as defining tracks. I can imagine every DJ playing a different song than the next. Heavy Water Factory have more talent than most, without a doubt, and aside from the awful soloing guitar in their live performances (where does it come from? It's nowhere on the CD), they are also a great band to see live. – *Jeremy Pfah*

TRANCE TO THE SUN – *Delirious* (Ambulancia)
 Always at the forefront of experimental goth music, Trance to The Sun don't appear to have even slipped a notch after the departure of vocalist Zoe Wakefield. If anything, they seem poised to make an even bigger name for themselves among the dark-music audience than ever. Propelled by the hypnotic drumbeats, maddening bass-lines, crazed synths and guitar mastery of multi-instrumentalist Ashkelon Sain, the songs on *Delirious* are insanely infectious. And for those worried about Zoe's departure, have no fear. New singer Dawn Wagner not only fills the shoes, she will obliterate all memories of past vocals from your mind. With a voice that can swoop from the cloudy heights of Cocteau Twins' Liz Frasier down to the sexually charged growl of Switchblade Symphony's Tina Root, Dawn brings a whole new feel to the band. Ashkelon steps up to show he has an excellent voice as well on "Sympathy For Cruel Causes." The two songs that leave the deepest impression are the gentle sounds of "Violet Thursday" and the fantastically frenetically paced "Leaves." *Delirious* is a most fabulous EP that is a huge tease for the full length album *Equinox*, due out this fall on Ambulanica. – *Gary Thrasher*



SUBARACHNOID SPACE – *Ether Or* (The Unit Circle)

This improvisational band is led by the prolific Mason Jones of Charnel Music along with Jason Stein from Tekachi, Melynda Jackson, and Michelle Schreiber. Named after a part of the brain called the subarachnoid space, this quartet creates a high-flying instrumental trip into the outer and inner limits of human experience. Relaxed tribalistic drums, swirling atmospheric and spacey guitars, bass, and the occasional didgeridoo provide the backbone for *Ether Or*, their second release. I enjoy the way the music is at times soft and soothing while others it swells into a dreamy trance inducing rhythm, providing an entertaining background of organic improvisational sounds. Their next CD will be out soon on Release. – *Octavia*

VARIOUS ARTISTS – *Drug Test One* (Invisible)

This double disc is the first in a series of live archives of Invisible's incredible acts. The first disc features a long electro atmosphere by **Not Breathing**, followed by five delicate yet disturbing experimental atmospheric tracks from **Dead Voices on Air**. The second disc has more beat power with four songs from the raunchy **Sheep on Drugs** with their pumped up electronics and **Andi Sex Gang** style vocals. This intense set is followed by four high energy **Test Dept.** songs which beautifully showcase their unique cross-cultural electronic sounds. These phenomenal songs make the whole compilation worth while. The booklet completes the package with concert footage and e-mailed reviews of the performances from fans. Nothing can compare to experiencing a live performance first hand, but for those of us stuck at home or in an unfortunate town, *Drug Test* is a close second. – *Octavia*

FRACTURE – *Killernet* (Pendragon)

The intent of this release is to be intense electro detailing the evils of information overload and the omnipresence of technological human tracking tools; i.e. Big Brother gone high-tech. Behold the first lines of the disc: "Electric wires are digging deep within, a web of fire spreading poison sin." However, Canadian Alexis Charalambous, the man behind Fracture, is addressing much more than simply the Information Superhighway on *Killernet*—a pretentious and annoying title I must say. The dense electronics and warp speed distorted beats on "Programmed for Hell" and "Download" effectively reinforce the technology overkill motif. "Terror Eyes" is the first song which deviates from the techno terror approach and is probably the best, and most powerful, song on the album. "Never Forgive" offers up some harsh synth pop as does "Good Kill." What I found disappointing was the lack of vocal and aural variation. The entire album, vocals and music, exists in the high-distortion and even higher treble region of the sound spectrum. The backgrounds are rarely lush or fully developed—we're talking about a token synth sweep at best. All in all, there are several cool tracks here, but the lack of depth is somewhat limiting from a listeners perspective—imagine a slightly angrier **ATD Convention**, carrying with it the same shortcomings. – *Sandman*

RAZED IN BLACK – *Overflow* (Cleopatra)

Razed in Black, the product of Hawaiian native Rommell Regulacion, has an aggressive-electro style fusing electric beats with guitars (like a mix of **Leather Strip** and **Birmingham 6**) and (I hate to say it) **Nine Inch Nails** style vocals. The remix EP, entitled *Overflow*, contains seven tracks; six of which appear in original form on Razed in Black's debut, *Shrieks, Laments, and Anguished Cries*. The new song, "Overflow," shows a more self assured sound, and I would have liked to hear more new songs like it. With an impressive line-up including **Leather Strip**, **Brain Leisure**, and **Implant** behind the boards, the remixes are much like the originals except they are better produced with higher BPMs geared for the club scene. *Overflow* has an extraordinary blend of the familiar that is pleasing to hear and entirely well crafted that those of you who like to swim in the deep end of remix hell will appreciate. – *Tim Gonzales*

VARIOUS ARTISTS – *Industrial Mix Machine* (Cleopatra)

This interesting 2-CD compilation from Cleopatra is a treat for fans of the remix. Twenty-four tracks by some of the hottest bands in the industrial scene today are remixed by some of the same! So you get some cool takes on the originals, which are mostly successful, some being rather brilliant. One example would be **Paul Raven's** (ex-Killing Joke) superb remix of **The Damned's** "Shut It." While The Damned are hardly an industrial band, the remix here takes them firmly into said territory. But more often things fall into the solid industrial line and some other tracks of special mention are **Spahn Ranch's** "Heretic's Fork" (remixed by **Birmingham 6**), **Waiting for God's** "2 Extremes" (remixed by the amazing **Collide**) and **Haujobb's** "World Window" (remixed by **Wumpscut**). Also, *Razed in Black* remix **Pygmy Children's** "Intensity," while their own "Just Let Go" is remixed by **Brain Leisure**. Anyway, you get the idea. Not all the tracks are exclusive, many being lifted from existing albums, but that's okay—it's just great to have them all compiled in this form! As industrial compilations go, *Industrial Mix Machine* is one of the very best I've heard in some while. – *Tony Lestat*



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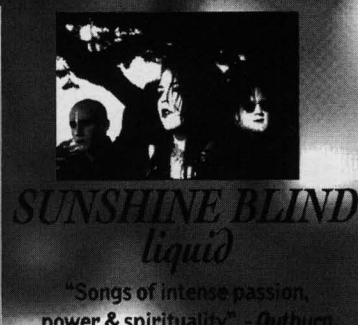


CHRIST ANALOGUE - *In Radiant Decay* (Re-constriction)

The check is in the mail, so here goes the review...*In Radiant Decay*, the best (and only noteworthy?) release Re-constriction has put out lately, successfully blends edgy sequences and powered guitar chords into a clean and well produced sound. With the programmed energy and yelping vocals reminiscent of **Nitzer Ebb**, *In Radiant Decay* follows the path that **Sister Machine Gun** should have taken after the *Torture Technique*. What I like most about *In Radiant Decay* is that the electronics hover around the mid to lower end of the keyboard...none of that chimie, high-ended tinkering crap. The production and mix on the entire CD sounds incredible as exemplified on "This Shall Not Breathe" and "Wear." Complex, cool sounds, but not overloaded. I could learn a lot from this release. And heck, even the jewel case design is far above average. Highly recommended...you probably won't hear anything else that sounds as good as this CD and oooooooh...the distorted beats on "Optima," the panning effects on the beaty "Grain," and the crunchy guitar on "Unclean" are more than enough to make me want to get up and dance. But since I lack the motor skills that most humans possess, I'll just have to shake my head back and forth to the beat. ~ *rodent*

ANGIZIA - *Die Kemenaten Scharlachroter Lichter* (Napalm)

Angizia has come up with a format that is definitely off the beaten path. Actually, I don't rightfully know what this is supposed to be (it would probably help if I could read German), but the best way I can describe it is a gothic/industrial opera. Quite possibly the world's first. There are five movements on this more than 65 minute CD. The female vocals are beautifully gothic and up front, while the subdued industrial-like male vocals are angry and unintelligible. The music is old world style gothic with guitars and percussion thrown over the top for good measure. Let me clarify. Imagine **Danielle Dax** and **Al Jourgenson** performing 14 minute duets to moody baroque chamber music performed by **Mozart** and **Joe Satriani**. Oh, and Danielle and Al are on speed so the lyrics are almost completely unintelligible and in German anyway with only flits of English thrown in. The end result is a bizarre, but listenable CD which should play well at any dinner party (provided your guests are already slightly inclined to this type of music). *Die Kemenaten Scharlachroter Lichter* is a great change of pace, but I doubt there will ever be anything else really like it again. It's just too darned novel. ~ *Shade*



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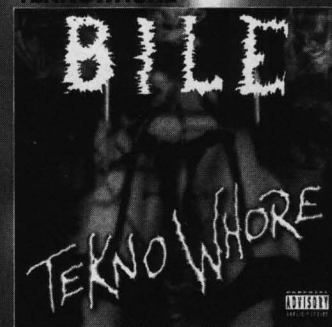
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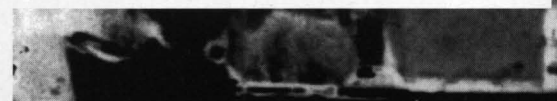
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PAUL SCHUTZE AND PHANTOM CITY – Site Anubis (Big Cat)

Site Anubis is like an hour long braindump—a sprawling, flowing stream of emotions, horrors, and concepts. Austrian composer Paul Schutze laid down some basic keyboard tracks to set the tone, then mailed the tapes around the globe to a team of accomplished musicians, including master bassist Bill Laswell, and had them add their own musical contributions. Finally, Paul gathered it all up again and attempted to consolidate the various pieces into a cohesive and striking work of art. Schutze's work could be described as ambient jazz given the quasi-improvisational nature of the instrumentation and the focus on a certain mood or feel rather than on an actual direction or concrete idea. Each musician went off on his own separate stream of consciousness groove leaving Paul to wrap it all up into a listenable package. No vocals are entered into the mix since the instrumentation alone adeptly conveys the themes of urban decay, social chaos, and internal strife. The sense of confusion is pervasive. The sounds themselves are very eclectic, spanning from Eastern drones and African percussion hits to Latin rhythms. Conceptually the method of recording is brilliant, but this was not enough to carry my interest for an entire hour. The random cacophony makes the impression the artists are striving for, yet left me feeling disconnected from the music. – Sandman [Paul Schutze's Deus Ex Machina, The Surgery of Touch, and The Annihilating Angel are now available on Tone Casualties.]

SPLASHDOWN – Stars and Garters (Castle von Buhler)

Splashdown combine brightly textured electronics, moving rhythms, soothing female vocals, and everything else imaginable into a friendly and spirited mix that reminds me fondly of many things, but sounds like nothing I've ever heard. Maybe I don't get out much, but Stars and Garters is an undefinable and unpredictable release filled with dance worthy beats, catchy guitar riffs, electronic oddities, and even sitars. The song writing is so varied and strong that each song proves to be a unique gem, but is still successful in creating an overall mood for the entire CD. I especially enjoyed the calming airiness of "Presumed Lost," the good 'ol guitar strength of "Need Versus Want," and the bass 'n beats of "Paradox." The vocals by Melissa Kaplan move the music to a higher level and should be mentioned because of her ability to adapt and provide the perfect balance between softness and strength without becoming too overbearing. Stars and Garters is impressive and irresistible. – rodent



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AN APRIL MARCH — **Adagio** (Bedazzled)

Adagio, a term used in classical music to describe tempo, also describes the tempo of most of the songs on this album—not really fast, and not really slow, but kind of in the middle. This limited edition EP has an almost pop flavor but with a moody undercurrent—dark and upbeat. It reminds me somewhat of the sounds of **Mistle Thrush**, with its multi-layered guitars and light drums. Danella sings in mostly alto ranges that evokes a quiet thoughtfulness in her tones. The subject matter of the lyrics seems to encompass relationships, with a smattering of self-understanding and a little dabbling in the spiritual. The album takes an interesting turn towards the end with the song “This Is” which starts out like most of their others. Then it suddenly transitions from a rock song into an atmospheric piece with soft instruments holding sustained notes and seemingly swirling out into the universe. The CD ends with a superb remix of its first track, “We Were Never Attached.” I like the remix better, mainly because the heavy guitars are toned down considerably to allow her voice to be better heard. I also like the hip-hop beat with its polyrhythms and added bass. *Adagio* would be better if the volume of the vocals was higher and if there was added variety to the melodies and beats instead of the common four beats per measure type of rhythm. Otherwise, this is a pretty good CD. — *Singing Rain*

SPAHN RANCH — **Architecture** (Cleopatra)

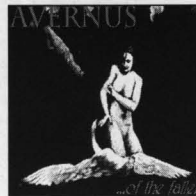
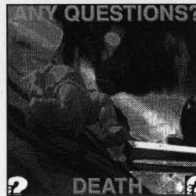
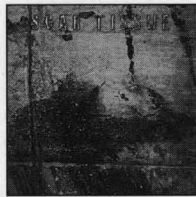
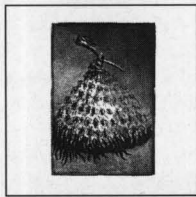
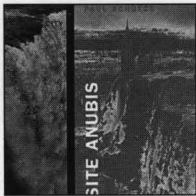
Architecture contains clean dance-friendly electronics, seductive vocals, and groovy melodies. Spahn Ranch, given their powerful promotion, could cross-over and become the new breed of **Depeche Mode** to dedicated fans. Each successive release starting with their rather dark and dirty debut, *Collateral Damage*, has gotten progressively polished and more marketable for mass consumption. On *Architecture* three sure-fire hits line themselves back to back with “Black Skinned Blue Eyed Boys,” “In the Aftermath,” and “Futurist Limited.” To balance out the intense vocal tracks, two instrumentals are included. *Architecture* is the pop generation of industrial, which leaves the music hanging in terms of depth, but it is fun and entertaining never-the-less. — *Octavia*

SCAR TISSUE — **TMOTD** (21st Circuitry)

For their second release Steve Watkins and Philip Caldwell have brought another sound experiment to the world. Dealing with heavy and hip hop beats, ambient rhythms, and loads of samples flying in and out, this could easily fit into a lot of categories. Less dancey than their first CD, *TMOTD* dives straight into the world of soundtrack ambient with some harder than usual beats. Overall, this is a fine effort, but those with no affinity for ambient styled music may want to seek elsewhere. — *Vince Cornelius*

ANY QUESTIONS? — **Death** (Floating Fish)

Any Questions? is a duo from Pottstown, PA that pumps out electro-industrial with some really rough edges. *Death* is an eight-track CD, and if the liner notes are to be believed, took the better part of four years to record. Five of these tracks can be dismissed outright as they are pure discombobulated amateur drivel. Fortunately, three tracks: “Lousy Human,” “Presto (You’re Dead),” and “Even In Death” are quite good and salvage this otherwise poor release. In fact, these three tracks are so infectious, I find myself reaching for this disc quite often. Sometimes less can be more, as I find it irritating that the other five tracks are even present—exposing how bad this band could be. I hope it doesn’t take another four years for the next release as there is some great potential here. They also have one of the sleekest press kits I’ve ever seen. — *Shade*



DEATHLINE INTL. — **Arashi Syndrome** (COP International)

Arashi Syndrome is industrial-wave at its best with a polished production, splendid vocals, solid programming, and a hint of abrasiveness in the attitude. The post-punk anthems convey an enticing darkness that is tempered with a sense of fun. The highlight of *Arashi Syndrome* is the striking cover of **Duran Duran**’s “Wild Boys” which brings to mind the original video that had those grotesque monsters swimming in the murky water. A lot of other songs on the album are just as catchy as “Wild Boys” and could have easily been conceived in the same time period. The melodious vocals and soft synths of “Murder” are straight out of the 80s. But on all the songs there is enough electro tinkering and 90s style to keep it current. Overall, this is a zestful release with a friendly mix of synths and guitars that makes you want raise your fist and yell, “Yeah!” — *Octavia*

EVIL’S TOY — **XTC Implant** (Metropolis)

The latest installment from Thorsten Brenda and Folker Lutz of Evil’s Toy represents a deviation from the dark EBM of *Human Refuse*. All of the songs are extremely club-friendly, and most of the elements of chaos and angst have been replaced by pristine electronics and aural clarity. Every note, noise, and rhythm is spaced out beautifully giving the mix a dynamic sound quality. Evil’s Toy has definitely beefed up on their equipment rig. Songs like “Victim of the Sun,” “Home,” and “Vanished Soul” combine thumping drums, sharp synth hooks, and smooth digital soundscapes with non-abrasive vocals which are sometimes untreated, sometimes vocoded. My favorite track is probably “Organics.” Of course, you’ll still find Evil’s Toy in the industrial section, but the truth is that this album is a lot closer to **Orbital** than **Skinny Puppy**. Much like **XMT** with *Meshwork*, Evil’s Toy stand to gain quite a few new fans with this more accessible effort but certainly risk losing some of their old ones. Personally, I find this to be a very potent piece of electro since the programming is impeccable. However, I still miss some of the twisted edginess of their earlier music. Overall, this CD will be a thrill ride for electronic purists while potentially leaving industrial heads a little techno-numb. — *Sandman*

ENDURA — **Great God Pan** (Elfenblut)

Paying homage to the goat god, England’s Endura continue their rapid output of esoteric ritual music. Actually, *Great God Pan* was originally recorded in the winter of 93–94 and shelved due to problems with an unprofessional label, the sessions resuming in the latter portion of 96. Quite different than the last release *Liber Leviathan*, the content here is more orchestral based, often times with sweeping marches. The acoustic somberness in “Dark Face of Eve” includes operatic female vocals along with the leading verses. The deep drones and faint voices of “From Sickening Skies” were recorded during an actual lunar eclipse, while the low spoken utterances of the foreboding “The Truth is a Sharp Knife” were done in Durham Cathedral. “A Black Dog Crossed My Path” shakes the listener up a bit with its sporadic jolting crashes. Offering an abundance of highly imaginative and original material in such a short period of time (five CDs since 94), Endura continue to impress with *Great God Pan* being no exception. — *Adam M. Bialek*

AVERNUS — **Of the Fallen** (MIA)

Of the Fallen is dark rock at its most intense and powerful. The metal guitars and drums are tempered by Celtic and Arabic melodies and gothic emotion, which give Avernus its unique sound. One of the most appealing aspects of Avernus is the beautiful contrast between the deep male vocals and the angelic female backing vocals. With eight emotionally moving songs, this Illinois based band has created a superb release with a tough edge that shows the rock side of goth is still flowing with life. — *Octavia*



VARIOUS ARTISTS – *Extreme Music*

From Africa (Susan Lawly)

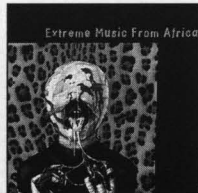
Seven years of doing a radio program on noise and I've NEVER come across something like this! Watch out! It's time to take a break from Japanese noise and focus our ears on Africa. This is just a minor perspective of the rise of sonic technology in a totally unique continent. *Extreme Music From Africa* is the latest compilation from the UK label Susan Lawly, known for the infamous *Whitehouse*. The compilation is a follow-up of *Extreme Music From Japan*, and features sound artists: *Rorogwela*, *Lucien Monbutou*, *Jonathan Azande*, *Vicious Teengirl*, *Government of Action*, *The Mbutti Singers*, and so much more. All tracks are of electro-acoustic nature and provide a new and challenging view of Africa. The pieces range from harsh electronics, to academic electro-acoustic soundscapes, to pure aesthetics of sound and design. This compilation is a result of extremely exhaustive research through countries as diverse as Morocco, Republic of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Uganda. And the end result is absolutely magnificent. This is more than worth your time to check out. ~ *texture*

PARALAX1 (Antifreeze)

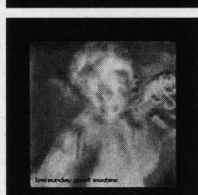
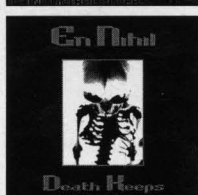
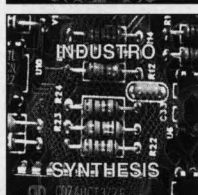
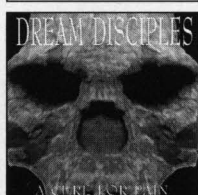
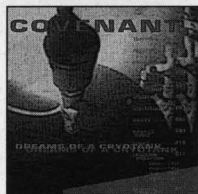
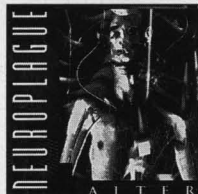
Art and music are alive and well up in the cold tundra of Alaska. Originally from New Jersey, the relocated dynamic duo of Cliff Livingston and Kara Thrasher emit an intriguing blend of tribal drums, environmental noises, and a thick wall of structured chaos on their self-titled debut CD release. Simply said, Parallax1 is something to hear, something to feel, and something not to be missed. With powerful percussion, sampled dialogue, and whatever instruments available for their unrestricted abuse, Parallax1 surpass any categorical labeling. It's dark, it's heavy, it's textured, and most importantly it's interesting and has personality. What is especially effective is the thick ambiance and warm room feeling of the instruments and samples, and the artful attitude in which the songs are constructed. Every song is an explosion of sound and adds to the CD's overall uniqueness, but I especially enjoyed the grimy guitar and layers of vocals on "The Voice," the pulsing electronics of "Radical Hypno Hi," and the robotic vocal effects of "We Are All." Even though the studio production seems a little stressed in spots (which actually makes this release even more admirable), Parallax1 has to be my personal favorite of all the releases I've heard in the past few months. ~ *rodent*

NEUROPLAGUE – *Alter* (Primordial)

Based out of the New York City area, Neuroplague reaches through the depths of the electro-mechanical psyche. I became familiar with the band through countless headlining and supporting performances in the rounds of New York City's club circuit. What stuck out in my mind was their incredible output of energy in performing—the noise! oh the noise, how beautiful it was! Alter, by far, is more than a depiction of a band trying to show what they can do—it is a definite indication that craft still exists in song writing. Lead by Matt Collins (programming, guitar) and the ever so vibrant Maggot (vocals, programming) it is safe to say that Neuroplague blends a perfect mixture of guitars, dark-mechanical electronics, stealthy samples of dialogue along with intense vocals, and a live rhythm section! Alter has a heavy emphasis on the electro much like *Ministry* circa *Twitch*, *Blok 57*, and even *Skinny Puppy*'s *Perpetual Intercourse* days. The music that Neuroplague produces is inviting, exciting, and full of rich conflicting passages guaranteeing no disappointment from listeners. ~ *Tim Gonzales*



PARALAX1



COVENANT – *The Theremin EP / Dreams of a Cryotank* (21st Circuitry)

Covenant is great electro-pop industrial now licensed to 21st Circuitry for stateside distribution from the dominant German label, Off Beat. Covenant is powerful dance industrial with strong vocals that will pump up any dancefloor. The *Dreams of a Cryotank* is a strong CD with every track having the potential to be a single, except for maybe the 25+ minute track "Cryotank Expansion," which could be an album all of its own. *The Theremin EP* contains eight dance floor friendly remixes of tracks from the *Dreams* LP. The most notable are club versions of "Theremin" and another infectious track called "Speed." Both have good dance beats and strong catchy refrains repeated ad nausea. There is also another track, "Figurehead," which is exclusive to this EP and is worth a serious listen. Both of these releases are very highly recommended for fans of dance oriented industrial, or in general if you like the sound of other Off Beat bands, because Covenant is in the same vein. ~ *Shade*

ZEROSPLITZERO – *Suicide Sex Device* (Spaceboy)

With tinkering electronics and fuzzy guitar chords, Zerosplitzero, spearheaded by Mark Miranda, capture the desperate and melodic aspects reminiscent of *Pretty Hate Machine* era *Nine Inch Nails*. Or to be more precise, the rounded off analog electronics actually remind me of *Cabaret Voltaire*, especially on the standout and groovy "Bang on the Can." *Suicide Sex Device* also contains instrumentals such as "Defining Gravity" and "Drain" which provide effective breaks between the lyrical songs. Other enjoyable tracks include "Hellout" with its heavy bass and "The Unknown" which contains *Skinny Puppy* "Testure" like keys behind a strong guitar riff. *Suicide Sex Device* is well worth the listen, but overall, however, this release may be too derivative of the familiar formulas of *Nine Inch Nails* and will leave the listener wanting a little more. This isn't necessarily a bad thing and I realize that this is an easy comparison in order to write a review, but Zerosplitzero definitely have the talent and ability that should enable them to push forward into their own unique identity on future releases. ~ *rodent*

DREAM DISCIPLES – *A Cure for Pain* (Carrion)

Judging the CD by it's cover I would guess this work to be exquisitely heavy, moody, and intensely Gothic. I find this to be true, at least in part. The lyrics are indeed heavy, covering such topics as dissolution of self in a messed-up society, loss of innocence, and the feeling of disillusionment with society and religion. Death and the inner "demons" are faced and confronted. There's a wealth of feeling conveyed both by the well-spoken lyrics and the singer's voice. What makes this album somewhat unconvincing in its attempt at dark intensity, is the music itself. The synthesizers lack something in feeling and sound a little cheesy. The beats feel a little too much like mid to late eighties pop-rock or light metal. The guitars only occasionally emit a few dark notes that coincide with the dark tone of the lyrics. The subject matter of "Netropolis" and the techno-like beat of "Care of the Devil" are my only reminders that this album came out in the nineties. I do dig this album, but mostly for its lyrical content. Perhaps in their next album, Dream Disciples can work on matching their intensity in feeling and thoughtful lyrics with a more mature and deeper quality in music. ~ *Singing Rain*

VARIOUS ARTISTS – *Industro Synthesis* (Decomposed Skunk Bud Productions)

If you thought the electro scene was non-existent in New Mexico, think again. *Industro Synthesis*, put together by a new Albuquerque based label, brings you 18 tracks of electronic fury from 16 diverse underground industrial bands. Most of the tracks are from new bands with burgeoning talent that still have a rough feel. The one band included that has already made a name in the electro scene with their numerous albums on Cri Du Chat, is the Brazilian *Aghast View*. They contribute "Torrent Haze," a heavy electro song with deep vocals. Some of the most notable contributions come from bands with an electro-goth tinge to their style including: *Manhole Vortex*, *Wrack Process*, *Disband*, and *Black Dahlia*. The band that caught my attention with their minimal dark electronics was *162*, who contributed two unusual songs: "Requiem" featuring beautiful female vocals and "Lodge" which integrated a great sample of *Star Trek*'s Spock into the music. *Industro Synthesis* will add variety to your life with its raw and underground electro/industrial/goth. ~ *Octavia*

EN NIHIL – *Death Keeps* (Red Stream)

The powers of darkness are quite capable of making even the most familiar of surroundings take on less comfortable attributes. California artist En Nihil gives an entirely new meaning to this notion with these five disquieting tracks of nocturnal unrest. *Death Keeps* emanates cold atmospheres that lurk about not unlike the passing of a ghostly presence through an otherwise empty room. Low distant moans throughout will also make the listener wonder if they really are alone. The tribal percussion in the opener "Final Bliss" invokes the rites of voodoo ceremonies and could possibly be the best cut. If you're looking to stir up those spirits you believe to be inhabiting your house, *Death Keeps* is the perfect medium. ~ *Adam M. Bialek*

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LOW SUNDAY GHOST MACHINE

Spearheading the new underground of gothic rock, Low Sunday Ghost Machine have created a debut album, available through Etherhaus, that will drop jaws around the world. This five-piece band combines elements of **The Cure** and **Joy Division**, into a brilliant blast of scintillating sound propelled by the deep yet refreshingly un-Eldritch vocals of Shane. The rest of the sound is provided by the ethereal and angsty blend of Shane and Scott's guitars, the brilliant keyboard work of Dale Reckless, the strong bass playing of Marc, and the steady percussion of L.P. The songs can range from the fast goth rock of "For a Moment" to the slow churn of "Overslide," but I find the most appeal in the almost-gothpop of "Your Eden" and the gentle caresses of "Blast." Low Sunday Ghost Machine is a fine blend of gothic rock with pop overtones that is sure to take the world by storm. - Gary Thrasher

XORCIST - Soul Reflection (21st Circuitry)

Bat (a.k.a. Peter Stone), the man behind Xorcist, has been creating his dark compositions for over a decade, and that experience has paid off with *Soul Reflection*. This third full length release is a masterpiece of dark electro. The music is brilliant with various samples worked exquisitely into the upbeat yet introspective songs. The overly distorted vocals convey the technological attitude and atmosphere of Xorcist remarkably. With access to a CD-ROM and a HTML viewer *Soul Reflection* allows you to explore the extended web pages of Xorcist and numerous paintings by evoltwin without logging on. The great thing about this enhanced CD is the plethora of information easily and quickly accessible including: interviews, reviews, history, discography, philosophical thoughts, artwork, photos, and video. The videos don't win any prizes for content, but it was impressive that they were even included. The best part of the CD-ROM, in my opinion, is that we get a chance to look into Bat's world through extensive reflective musings on various societal, political, and other topics. Bat is inspiring with his positive outlook on the future and a drive to build that future. It makes the music that much better when there is a heartfelt and educated passion behind it. From the music standpoint alone, I highly recommend *Soul Reflection*, and the enhanced CD just pushes it over the top. - Octavia

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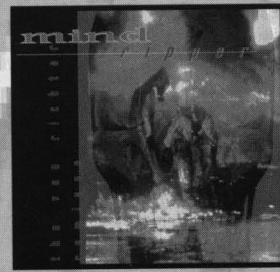
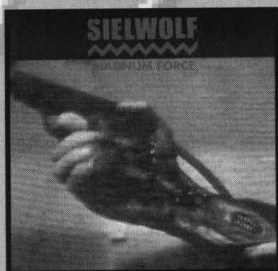
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BP. SERVICE - Deep Signal (Tone Casualties)

Bp. Service create sophisticated electronic compositions that combine dance beats with experimental noisescapes. *Deep Signal* is the Budapest band's second release on Tone Casualties. It stands out because of it's wide variety of unusual sounds including: metallic sounds, chaotic whispers of noise, mysterious atmospheres, odd vocal manipulations, crushing noise, and fragile tinkering. The almost twenty minute opening track is relaxed and somber, but it still grooves with pleasant beats, strange sampled sounds, and etheric female cries. The second track is minimal with gentle waves of the noises of passing motorists. A car alarm shatters the calm, transitioning the song into an echoing of metal. Breaking from the norm, the sixth track uses a child's chant repeated over and over above swelling string instruments and tinkling chimes. There is a wealth of amazing sounds on *Deep Signal* that I would enjoy even more if they were incorporated into more concrete song structures, but the unconventional instrumentals are still worthwhile and enjoyable. ~ Octavia

KHZ - Cryogenic Sleep (Propain)

Cryogenic Sleep is compelling. From beginning to end it keeps me at the edge of my seat. I am riveted, wanting to stay alert so as not to miss anything. KHZ uses a mix of sounds that resemble water dripping, modems connecting, outdoor sounds, and other strange noises, offset by soft synthesizer and bass. The wispy vocals of Raiana balance out the harder sounds, drawing the listener in. The lyrical content of almost every song is nothing less than intense. Raiana has an uncanny ability to delve straight to the heart of the issue. There's a relentless and almost merciless unearthing of deep-seated feelings. Her main theme throughout the CD is the inescapable pain of relationships, reality, and life. Their cover of *Depeche Mode's* song "Fly on the Windscreen" completely overturns the notion that a cover can't be as good as the original. The whisper of her voice...the deep passion of the song, makes you want to oblige her, whatever her wishes. The intense songs are interspersed with interesting samples of monologues with a guy expressing his point of view on a myriad of subjects. Right up to the last song, the energy is high and yet I enjoy keeping up with it. KHZ also shows refreshing bilingual capabilities with some Spanish lyrics in "Anxiety Attack." This is a thoroughly satisfying CD for diehard goths, but it also satisfies those with a love for industrial sounds. *Cryogenic Sleep* is a miracle of sound. ~ Singing Rain

VARIOUS ARTISTS – Killing Me Softly With Noise (Noise / Taiwan)

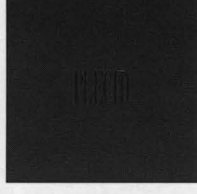
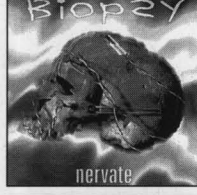
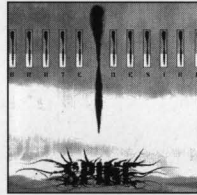
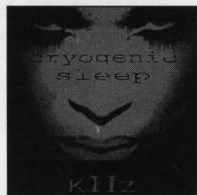
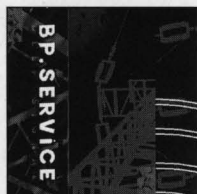
Fronted by Fujui Wang and Anes Kuo, Noise/Taiwan has completed their long awaited debut CD: *Killing Me Softly With Noise*. After releasing over twenty-some cassette and video releases, Noise/Taiwan takes a step ahead of the usual Noisenet compilations and ventures toward their true passion for the more experimental work of world renown artists. Noise/Taiwan's past seven Noisenet releases have focused purely on exposing everything in the noise scene from harsh Japanese noise, abusive UK noise, German, Swiss, to raw American underground. Artists like **Telepherique**, **Daniel Menche**, **Macronympha**, **TAC**, **Con-Dom**, **Pain Jerk** are just some of the many artists that can be found on the Noisenet compilations. However, almost all the "Noisenet" releases are very heavy and harsh. With *Killing Me Softly With Noise*, we see a much more academic side of noise with tracks by **CM Von Hausswloff** (Sweden), **Straffe Fr** (Germany), **Syllyk** (France), **Ching-Shen-Ching** (Taiwan), **Hybryds** (Belgium), and two world famous US artists, **Crawl Unit** and **Small Cruel Party**. The compilation is organized well; the dense soundscapes are intelligent but remain honest ...stripped away of ostentation, continuously intense and very real. After a lot of stress and work, Fujui and Anes' outstanding job on this compilation will most definitely earn them the recognition they deserve. Although Noise/Taiwan's main purpose is to discover sound work from all over the world to further expose this art form in Taiwan, it will also further expose the art of sound and noise on a global level. – *texture*

SPINE – Brute Desire (Rapa Nui)

Spine may at first appear to be just another European band that combines metal guitars, heavy drums, and electronics. However, they do a surprisingly good job at it which sets them apart from the cheese laden masses. Leaning more on the heavy, dark metal side of things, Spine creates four lengthy well composed songs in which the energized electronics blend well with the guitars. *Brute Desire* also includes two great remixes which have a more interesting abstract feel with subdued guitars. Ranging from slow and grinding to frenzied tempos and harsh to almost calming vocals, *Brute Desire* is a spine shattering release. – *Octavia*

NOISE UNIT – Drill (Metropolis)

Never being the ones to take a rest, the ever prolific team of Bill Leeb and Rhys Fulber return as Noise Unit with their fifth release. This nine track follow-up to the trance powered *Decoder* is considerably more aggressive while simultaneously becoming more intricate with regards to the programming and layering. "The Drain" and "Dominator" for example incorporate some sparse guitars into the mix which work very well. "Miracle" even makes the processed guitars an integral aspect to go along with the (dare I say) hip hop beats of the song. Those who had a problem with *Millennium* need not worry, as the guitars simply do not overpower the various layers of unique sounds carefully created and executed. In fact, all has been done with a meticulous sense of precision. Portions of the last three tracks bear some resemblance to their Delerium material, moving towards more spiritual flowing numbers. "Other World" and "Penance" are laced with samplings from the film *The Prophecy* and forcefully convey such striking imagery. Original member Marc Verhaeghen of **Klinik** makes a bit of a return to the group along with special input from the members of **Haujobb**. Both are more or less thanked for providing some "new sounds and creative input" so one may be left in the dark as to what each brought to the finished product and just how much. Despite this minor ambiguity, *Drill* is a top notch album from the pioneers of the electronic music scene. – *Adam M. Bialek*



THE FAIR SEX – Fine. We Are Alive (Van Richter)

Wait. Are those live cymbals I hear? Why yes. *Fine. We Are Alive* is the recounting of The Fair Sex's dance music career, with half of the tracks from live performances. I offer this opinion, "The world needed no such beast!" The tough-boy vocals are annoying and overbearing at times, and the guitar is typical cheez whiz. The crisp sequences and pounding beats are the items that work best. There are a number of good songs presented here, but the live format does little for them. A greatest hits album would be a far more effective way to introduce this reasonably solid dance band to a new audience. – *Sandman*

TRIANA – The Color of Sound (TriLab)

TriAna presents bright electronics with a hint of gothic, new wave, and dance sensibilities on this debut CD, *The Color of Sound*. For those of you with the ultra-cool underground *Tribute to the Sisters of Mercy: First and Last and Forever*, you may have heard the less than notable cover of "Heartland" by TriAna. The work of Daniel Triana has improved dramatically since that 1993 release, but *The Color of Sound* still doesn't reach that level of innovation that would make me crazy about it. However, this disc does contain some great upbeat and fun electronics tempered by introspective and romantic lyrics. I've heard enough about the bull of machines and technology...it's just nice to hear an electro release deal with human emotions. The vocals, all written by Daniel, are sung by him, as well as Coleman and James who add a nice variety to the mix. The last seven songs are dancey instrumentals that would sound great on your favorite action adventure CD-ROM game and hint at Daniel's house/dance interests. With 16 tracks, *The Color of Sound* is overflowing with colorful and cool music that shows a lot of potential. – *Octavia*

BIOPSY – Nervate (Cri Du Chat)

Make sure your seat-belt is fastened and the safety bar is locked into position before listening to this CD! A couple of guys formerly of **Aghast View** have rejoined forces to form the nerve-shattering Biopsy. For those of you that don't already know, this is industrial at its roughest and toughest. *Nervate*, is an unstoppable onslaught of grinding noise and terror definitely not for the weak of heart. The only chance to catch your breath doesn't come until the next-to-last track, "Dark Chamber Symphony," a dark instrumental piece slightly reminiscent of **Wumpscut**. The other fifteen tracks are all industrial of the hardest core. There are three versions each of "Speed Crash Volition" and "Sonic Suppuration." Then there are two pairs of songs ("Never Inhale/Never Say Never" and "Enclosure/Disclosure") that are obviously different mixes of the same track. The remaining six tracks that only appear once are peppered throughout the disc to break up the monotony of hearing the same tracks two or three times in too rapid a succession. *Nervate* is a pretty solid disc, although it could be four or five tracks lighter and still be good. If you like rough-n-tumble industrial like **Bile**, you might want to check these guys out. – *Shade*

NOT BREATHING – Sangre Azul (Invisible)

The ever so prolific and collaborative Not Breathing focus on material with this CD that ranges from shooting electronics with underlying melodies to odd noise samples and bass filled beats. *Sangre Azul* is a crisp sounding, well produced release that is reminiscent of a less aggro **Download** mixed with a warm **Projekt**-like ambience. Although all of the songs are eclectic instrumentals, much of the electronic instrumentations and samples take on lyrical or character like roles, as in "The Ventilator." Other standout tracks include the melodic "Xanax," the head bouncing bpm bursts of "Rotorhead Aggression Release," and the interestingly titled "Electromagnetic Disembowler." I still can't figure out if that's a song about a device to remove one's bowels or a new type of bowling. Perhaps the strongest and most enjoyable part of *Sangre Azul* is the balance between its carefree and open minded attitude mixed with the rigors of programmed electronics. Overall, Not Breathing successfully combine academic electronics and sometimes disrupting, but always dreamy atmospheres. – *rodent*

PLECID (The Ajna Offensive)

Plectid is smooth, tranquil, and calm, although there is melancholy deep within the core to keep the music from being completely devoid of disturbances. Apparently, Plectid is the musical interpretation of "The Philosophy" of The Plectid Foundation and explores the neither-neither world of primal sexuality. But Plectid is more suited for those slothful days you're just too tired to get out of bed. The "narcotic sleepy-time music" is even "guaranteed to invoke your most lucid, celestial nightmares." Subdued male vocals seductively and depressingly whisper against a dark wash of electronics and guitars. The vocalist reminds me of a **Michael Gira** on valium. The music is soft and abstract with quiet waves of sound and tinkling guitars adding the slightest texture. Plectid is well produced with subtle nuances in the song writing...but I think it's time for me to take a nap now. – *Octavia*

STIGMA — *Inhumanity* (Ant Zen)

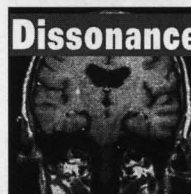
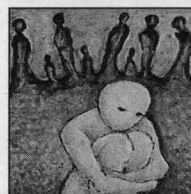
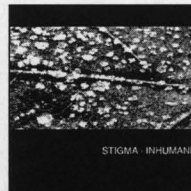
The second CD offering of this promising French band is a powerful fusion of dark ambient and heavy industrial stylings which results in maximum crossover appeal. Machine-like factory rhythms combine with bludgeoning percussion, floating electronics, and harsh vocals. *Inhumanity* conveys an Arctic Circle atmosphere, forcefully realized via howling winds and other barren ambient nuances. Stigma warrants your immediate attention. — *Adam Bialek*

NO ONE (Feedback)

Being constantly exposed to so much sound sculpting is sometimes disheartening. And when you think you've just about heard everything, something new comes along. No One takes a lighter side to sound sculpting and design. Although I wouldn't quite categorize this work as "noise," it is a soothing disc for the noise audience as well as the many who enjoy the outskirts of noise. This disc provides the listener with eleven comforting tracks of various loops, voices, and digital editing. Imagine a sweet mixture of *Dead Voices On Air*, *Negative Land*, and early *Severed Heads*. The work is layered, mixed and looped in an organized fashion but without strict anal precision. It provides a mysterious atmosphere for those who want it, and anyone who tries to escape it. — *texture*

EVIL MOTHERS — *Spider Sex and Car Wrecks* (Invisible)

Well, we haven't heard from Evil Mothers since the Route 666 tour a couple of years ago. They were pretty good then, but the time off has really done them some good. Unlike their first album, *Pitchforks and Perverts*, this new release actually has full-sounding, well-conceived songs with a definite beginning and end. Produced by Martin Atkins, *Spider Sex and Car Wrecks* takes them to a new level. All of the twelve tracks are new material except for an enhanced version of "I Like Fur" which really rocks. And if you think the rockin' stops there, you should check these guys out live. It is a much improved show since Route 666. I can't say enough good things about this disc, so just buy it. — *Shade*



DISSONANCE (Hakatak)

Hakatak, the label formed by Paul Robb (Remember him from the fun and funky Information Society? I saw them at Grad Night at Disneyland...Oh, the memories!), presents the debut of the Texas band Dissonance. With powerful female vocals up-front in the mix and an upbeat pop-dustrial base, Dissonance is much like a female version of *Spahn Ranch*. Just about all the songs could easily cross over into the mainstream alternative with their friendly melodies, crooning vocals, and hip electronic beats. Because the CD is so jam packed with single-ready songs, Dissonance is better suited for DJ play and compilation appearances than listening to the whole album at once, as the similar sounding songs may overload your circuits. However, the individual songs stand up well by themselves, providing a welcome variety to the electronic scene. — *Octavia*

THE AZOIC — *The Divine Suffering*

(World Record)

Imagine waking in a sweat from a dreamworld in which you have been ritually tortured...spiders hatched in your flesh...tied in the middle of a long abandoned chapel, with only whispering winds and twisted evocations of pain to break the silence; this is *The Divine Suffering*—the stunningly twisted debut from The Azoic. Featuring the stark instrumentalism of Steve Laskarides, the heavily effected male vocals of Shawn Lower and Steve, and the floaty female vocals of Kristy Venrick, they create an atmosphere not unlike that of *Oneiroid Psychosis*, but still undeniably their own. This album will leave a violent impression upon all who hear it, and will turn many heads. Expect good things from The Azoic. — *Gary Thrasher*

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:improvisational electronic soundscapes: Recorded live at Lumpy Gravy, the exotic personnel of MC Seven, The Big Kahuna, and F/Xavier Cugat perform eclectic electronic noise experiments utilizing the finest in technology and hot dog dancers.

AOTEAROA — *Lana Dica* *

:live black metal with spoken/yelled vocals: This intense live performance sounds like it created a blood spewing pit of fury. The grinding guitars and noise, as well as lyrics, were fairly typical black metal, but one of the three songs had a spoken female voice that was interesting.

DARK BOX — *Tainted with Pain* **

:slow gothic rock with dark vocals, gritty washes of guitars, gothic keyboards, and simple bass-lines and drums: This four song release reminds me of a rough Prophets and shows much improvement from their last release.

DEPRESSOR — *Grace* **

:intense punk metal influenced by Godflesh, Prong, and Ministry: The interesting aspect of this four song tape comes in the conscious lyrics covering diverse topics such as the horrors of meat eating, revenge for an appalling crime excused by a broken system, and the demise of the earth.

THE EMPIRE HIDEOUS — *Act IV* ***

:solid gothic rock: This three song tape is a preview for their upcoming CD to be released on the new label, Black Vatican. The music exhibits a typical Sisters of Mercy style, but it sounds great.

FIFTH COLUMN FETISH (Bathos) ***

:upbeat industrial with death and war inspired lyrics: The seven songs stand out for their inventive compositions and quality recording.

R.H.Y:YAU — *Stimbox* (Auscultare) **

:chaotic screeches of noise: This is the second part of a collaboration between Tim Oliveira, who provided the sound source, and Randy H.Y. YAU, who did the arrangements and added his dissonant vocal manipulations to the sounds to create cacophonous noise.

SEPARATE FAITH ***

:goth industrial with dark distorted vocals: The two songs featured on this tape have a good mix of synths and programming with guitars and drums. Newer and improved songs can be found on both the *Industro Synthesis* compilation as well as *Cyberpuncture* (see page 5).

TRESPASSERS WILL ***

:dark electro industrial with experimental sounds and samples in the vein of Skinny Puppy: This 14 song tape chronicles the work of Trespassers Will since its inception in 1994.

VARIOUS ARTISTS — *Out From Isolation*

(Simple Fucking Concepts) ***

:spoken words set to noisy, experimental, and very dark songs: Its strength lies in the diversity of twisted visions of isolated existence presented. I've never heard anything quite like this. Accompanying the cassette is a booklet featuring art and lyrics from each band. The Decibel bands Oneiroid Psychosis and Alien Faktor also appear on this 17 song compilation.

WAGE CLASS SLAVE — *Standard Structural Adjustment Policy* ***

:atmospheric noise: The first side features three dirgey noise pieces with minimal spoken vocals exploring topics of war and exploitation. The second side is a wall of never-ending noise. Wage Class Slave also have a song on the *Out from Isolation* compilation as well as the *Cyberpuncture* compilation (see page 5).

WRACK PROCESS — *Fleshcodes*

(United Endangered Front) ***

:experimental dark electro: Nine unconventional songs combine electro beats with touches of noise, synths, and minimal vocals. Wrack Process, as well as the members' solo projects, Danos and In Virus Tandem, can be heard on the *Cyberpuncture* CD (see page 5).

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